LOVELY BASTARDS

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/48397432.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warnings:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence, Rape/Non-Con
Categories:	F/M, Gen, M/M, Multi, Other
Fandoms:	Hannibal (TV), Hannibal Lecter Tetralogy - Thomas Harris
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Matthew Brown/Will Graham, Will Graham & Beverly Katz, Matthew Brown/Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Alana Bloom/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham's Father, Matthew Brown (Hannibal), Beverly Katz, Francis Dolarhyde, Alana Bloom, Jack Crawford, Dr. Frederick Chilton, Freddie Lounds, Abigail Hobbs, Barney Matthews, Clarice Starling, Mischa Lecter
Additional Tags:	Public Humiliation, Angst, Jealous Hannibal Lecter, Dark Will Graham, Sassy Will Graham, Young Will Graham, Possessive Hannibal Lecter, Fluff and Angst, Eventual Smut, Fluff and Smut, Mischa Lecter Lives, Hannibal Lecter Being an Asshole, Hannibal Lecter is Bad at Feelings, Will Graham & Beverly Katz Friendship, Hannibal is NOT patient, Clingy Hannibal Lecter, clueless will graham, Will doesn't know social cues, Will Graham Doesn't Care, Hannibal Lecter is the Chesapeake Ripper, Hannibal doesn't know boundaries, Alternate Universe - College/University, Slow Burn
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-07-06 Updated: 2024-01-05 Words: 33,974 Chapters: 16/?

LOVELY BASTARDS

by formaldolarhyde

Summary

17 year old Will Graham suddenly finds himself out of place and stuck in Ravenstag University, Baltimore’s most prestigious and infamous university due to being seen as a first hand witness of an attempted suicide incident caught on camera. Now Will has his arms tethered to the university, the FBI, and eventually the obsession of the school's notorious inheritor, Hannibal Lecter who grows more and more fond of the boy each interaction they had.

(Will is a senior [17] while Hannibal is in college [24])

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Virginia was not really a place where dreams are made of, nor is Wolf Trap. It mainly consisted of the old town folk or the ridiculously rich, no in between. 17 year old Will Graham was not one of the people in society on the latter side. Though not that popular as an individual, the Graham family were pretty well off, but barely on the cusp of prestigious. They also had a pretty successful local fishery which was a big hit even with high societies locally. But as of lately, business has been straddling on the verge of bankruptcy due to low quality catch from the cold season.

Will was a nihilist when it came to the "important" things in life, and he didn't have that many friends because of it. The only things that kept him practically alive were reading about the local crime cases, helping his dad with the fishery, as it was self-explanatory, and..dogs. Though he never owned one since his father hated them as it stemmed from a childhood trauma of being bitten by one, he always hung out with the local stray dogs, occasionally appearing in front of their house to feed them the leftover fish they had for the day. Living in a small town basically meant that almost nothing was kept hidden and almost everyone knew each other from a 10 mile radius.

Crime cases, specifically of weird avant-garde art murders have been increasing quite a bit ever since a new private university just opened upstate in Baltimore not even a year prior its rise in popularity. Crime wasn't new, but having corpses being laid out like sculptures straight out of the Louvre weekly was something people had never seen before. Well certainly not in a run-of-the-mill state like Virginia.

"Will! Give me a pen and paper asap!" Frank Graham aggressively snapped his fingers at Will, who was just mindlessly watching the news on the tv right across from him.

"Nevermind I got it thanks." Will watched his dad as the man's body language was more frantic than it usually was. Twirling his ragged fingers around the phone cord and prancing around the living room, he held on the phone base for dear life.

A few minutes has passed and all Will could hear are occasional "ah-s", "mhm-s", "yup-s" and, "no problem-s" being said in routine by his father. He already recognized this as the vocabulary whenever a big deal was being made. But he clearly noticed that this was different, as Frank was more friendly and feral than he was with regular business deals. But he wasn't one to deal with this kind of stuff yet, so he increased the volume on the tv instead, not caring about a thing.

BREAKING NEWS! This just in, a murder of a 17 year old Ravenstag student named Cassie Boyle had just been reported less than an hour ago by local Baltimore residents. The girl was last seen walking and smoking alone in the woods by a local resident, and hours later, she was seen dead, impaled-

Will decreased the volume and threw a glance at his father's direction as he noticed the silence on the other side of the room growing louder. "Alright sure! No problem- Uh- You want it as soon as possible??" A small worrying pause was conceived.

"By tomorrow?! I'm sorry boss but the commissary doesn't call til' next week!"

Frank gave a big sigh as voices thundered at the other side of the phone. "Yes yes I'll see what I can do Mr. Lecter. If ever they come by, my son Will is gonna take it to the university." The boy slumped back on the sofa, unimpressed.

"Alright ok, noted boss. Thanks buh-bye." Frank Graham's smile immediately wiped off as he put the phone down

"Who the hell was that?"

"Ha no no- it's nothing. It's just he wants the *absolute freshest* crops or whatever he meant by tomorrow morning but those don't even come by next week! And there is no way in hell that their standard of best is in a 1000 mile radius from our version of best! God what am I gonna do." Will frowned, seeing his dad this distressed for the first time in his whole life.

Will hated seeing his father like this, more so from a ridiculously rude client whom they knew nothing about and vice versa. "Who does this bastard think he is anyway? Why don't you just say no?"

Frank rubbed his pointers to his temples and gave out another big sigh. "I- Son I don't think you don't understand, business is business and y'know how the fishery's not been doing great lately. We might as well hit the rubble at some point."

"Then don't accept it if it stresses you out this much!"

"Do you hear yourself Will?! I am pulling on thin strings here just for us to make enough for the two of us, and try to salvage whatever is left of our fishery! So my pride, and certainly not *yours* isn't gonna come in the way of this deal! Might I remind you too that these people are a very prestigious family out and around here. So having this big of an investment would really mean a lot to our business ya get me?? Also.." He paused and turned to his son who was still indifferent about the situation.

"Y'know that pretentious university that just opened up in Baltimore? Uh- what's it called again it's Raven something. R-Raven.." Frank tried to remember.

Will on the other hand, recalled the suicide incidents flashed on the news not 10 minutes prior their conversation. "Ravenstag?"

"Yeah that one."

"Y-yeah what about it?" He leaned forward with a mix of keen intrigue and slight worry.

"The Lecters own it."

Will’s eyes widened like saucers. “No shit..” The business really was a hit around the area, but he didn’t think it would go this far all the way in Baltimore, moreso in high society.

“Figured..” Will mumbled, switching the tv off.

“Look son, uh- try and help me out here and find whatever we have down in the commissary- you’re delivering it first thing in the morning by tomorrow if I forgot to mention.”

“But- dad! Baltimore’s a 3 hour drive away! How the hell am I supposed to bring them fresh when they’re all goners by the time I get there?! Oh yeah and didn’t you just hear about the shit that’s going on in there less than 5 minutes ago? No way.”

“Suck it up, bring the tundra and figure it out cause I can’t afford to lose this deal boy.” Frank scolded as he clenched his teeth. “Besides, it’s just a small batch anyways, they’re still in for a health inspection for the school.”

“But-”

“AND, no more complaining! You’re up first thing in the morning.” Frank got up and lit a cigarette, signaling the end of the conversation. All Will could do was roll his eyes to the back of his head and try to think of ways to make a silver lining out of this. Now thinking about it, the boy reassessed the situation and thought that it would be a great opportunity to look into what was actually happening in the institution in order for it to rise in its famed infamy.

Will rolled his eyes. “Fine.”

Chapter End Notes

So I just finished reading Red Dragon and saw that it actually implied Will's father as an integral part in his background and upbringing (even if it was just a brief mention LMAO) so that was kinda what made me want to go into their dynamic even more. It was also kinda interesting since we know almost nothing about Will's background. (Lol this just became a red dragon book review PFFT)

Neways,, I've already written 8 chapters of this sht so I'll post the first 4 chapters first this week and the other 4 next week so buckle up folks this do be a slow burn acK.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“STOP! No! Please put down the knife.”

“What’s the point in existing when everyone wants you dead?”

Will started his day down the tiring three and half hour drive to Baltimore as early as 4 am in the morning. The skies were still black and no one was seen roaming around. Well it was quite explanatory considering he lived in the middle of nowhere, but he still felt a cold shiver down his spine as he drove down the dark roads with barely any streetlights and passed the towering pine trees surrounding the road. He felt like he was starring in an episode of twin peaks and was about to get transported to the black lodge in the blink of an eye. The feeling was euphoric but he felt like he was about to throw up and have an epiphany.

“Jesus..” Will breathed in as the ringing in his ears gradually became louder. Overstimulation was a common thing for Will, and it went either way for him. He couldn’t be placed in loud places for his life nor could he be alone for a long time with his thoughts, or else he’d lash out on everyone and kill himself. Eventually, the car radio was turned on and placed to the max volume to drown out any other impulses the boy had at that moment.

This just in! Earlier this morning the FBI had just officially confirmed that they would be doing their own separate investigation along with the help of the local Baltimore police force on the 17 year old Ravenstag student’s death. The bureau also confirmed that the university would be under a 24/7 surveillance itself. The victim’s name still remains confidential and their family has yet to come forward about it.

Not a second later, Will turned it off. Though he loved to read and hear about the local crime cases, he was never really affected by it as much as much as he was on this one. Will psychoanalyzed every bit of the known information that was put out since yesterday and before he knew it, the sun was already peeping through his tinted window and he was now less than 30 minutes away from Baltimore.

Will checked his watch and realized that he dissociated for almost 4 hours, while driving. “How the fuck is it 7 already.” He aggressively rubbed his face with his tired palms. Then before he knew it he was already passing a “Welcome to Baltimore” sign which meant he was getting closer to hell than he thought he was. More quaint buildings and structures were slowly appearing as the time passed and though this place was completely unfamiliar to the boy, it was relieving to see other people and cars out in the open after 3 and a half hours of deafening silence and his thoughts alone. Finding the university was also easier than he thought it would be, well not considering it looked like it occupied half the city and a huge Poe-esque gates surrounded the entire campus.

Will discreetly drove behind a group of students in uniform, trying to grab little pieces of dignity and courage left in him but was quickly caught by a student turning around. “Hi uh

excuse me- is this ravenstag?" He quickly inquired as the students gave him nothing more than disgusted looks. *I fucking knew it.* Will bit his inner lower lip to prevent himself from impulsively saying questionable things.

"What do you think?" A boy with shoddy blonde hair, square glasses, and a pretentious fur trench coat rudely replied. Will thought he almost looked exactly like a pig in designer clothes, in a metaphorical and literal sense.

"Alright?.. Yeah where's the entrance?"

"Look, why don't you find it yourself? You're not blind no?" laughed the group.

The brutish blonde eyed the pickup truck up and down with disgust "And why does your car smell like fish? It's disgusting."

"Have you never eaten fish before?"

"No it's disgusting.." He scoffed. "Clearly from the rotten stench coming from your place."

"Ah no wonder, yeah you should really try it sometime, it's rich in vitamin d and it's a- uhm, it's a vitamin to better your brain functioning in case you didn't know. Anyways, have a nice life." Will flicked a business card at them and immediately drove off, unknowingly leaving the students insulted. That left a great first impression on an already unimpressed Will and the urge to get out of there was growing stronger by the moment. Not long after he found the large entrance that led to the inside of the campus but still, he was lost and didn't even know where to drop the crops off.

"Where to?" Sternly asked the stationed enforcer.

"Uhm- I'm Will Graham, I'm just here to drop off some fish from the commissary for uh- a health inspection."

"Open your trunk sir."

"It's open." Will nervously said, adjusting the rear view mirror as the enforcer went through the trunk.

"Do you have a permit?"

"I- I need one?" The boy's breathing hitched.

"Well I can't let you through if you don't got no permit sir."

"Please just let me drop it off sir. I-I could just drop it off her-"

"No permit. No entry." The enforcer sternly emphasized, stopping a stammering Will from rebutting.

"Fine." Will proceeded to call his father but was immediately interrupted by the enforcer's pager signaling a green light for Will to pass.

“Searg if ever a boy named Will Graham comes to deliver some fish to the canteen, let him in.”

The enforcer replied back to his pager, *“Copy.”*

“What do you say your name was again?”

Will sighed in relief “Will Graham.”

“Do you have a license or id?”

“Y-Yeah hold on.” The boy stuttered, hurriedly picking out all his ids from his wallet with shaking hands. Not a second after the tense inspection, a large gate was opened for him to go through and a surge of relief washed over Will.

“Where can I drop this off?”

“Find the main entrance. There's people from the canteen waiting for you.” The enforcer said nothing more, but only gave a stern “get in or leave” look to Will, who was already on the verge of having a heart attack. So he instinctively drove off and had to do it the hard way and figure it out himself. When he thought his views on this school couldn’t get any worse, the standards are now down the pits of hell. *No wonder why so many people killed themselves here..* Wll thought.

For about 20 minutes he roamed around the enormous campus desperately just to find the main entrance, but luck was obviously not on his side that day. Only then he realized that his gas tank was almost empty and ultimately resorted to walking to find the main entrance.

“Fucking hell!” Will slammed the car door and briskly walked around to find whoever could help him. For another 10 minutes he walked around but still to no avail could he find anyone or anything to help as a matter of fact; and whenever he did, he’d only received disgusted and alienated looks from the students. This all felt like a fever dream to Will. Stranded to do errands in an unfamiliar place, with no one or nothing to help. Before almost giving in, he eventually found quite a handful of students cornering someone in one alley and instinctively decided to ask them.

“HI! Hello there! Is there any chance ya’ll know where the canteen- Fuck.” Will’s heartbeat stopped as he saw a bloodied girl in the middle of the crowd cornering her.

“Hey uh- look, why don’t you turn around, walk away and pretend like nothing ever happened. Okay?” A tall, ginger haired boy came forward, passive aggressively warning him.

“Boyle c’mere, Hobbs is about to collapse! Look!” Another boy laughed as he had the bloodied girl in a choke hold, aiming a curved knife by her throat.

Don’t you chicken out now Graham.. Will thought to himself as he now saw the crime scene first hand. The ginger boy walked away thinking Will had left but genuinely surprised that the boy still stayed.

Will wanted to back out last minute until he impulsively spoke up. “Look man, I don't want any trouble so just let the girl go.”

The taller student turned around and approached Will with a mix of amusement and annoyment. “Heh! Look at him fellas, uh do you know what she did- No no no, let me ask you who you are first. So speak up or you’re the one who's gonna be on the menu tonight.” The ginger boy threatened. Will didn’t say anything as his focus was on the bloodied girl almost lifelessly laying on the brick pavement.

“I said who are you!” The tall ginger began to throw vicious punches at Will but the boy instinctively dodged all of it until he was caught off guard when seeing the bloodied girl begin to stand up. A hard punch to the stomach was all it took for Will to collapse on the ground and get caught in a chokehold by the other henchmen.

“Don’t let him go! If he wants to watch, let him! We’re gonna show him.” Nicholas proceeded to walk towards the girl and handed her a pocket knife.”

“Y-You’re gonna ask her to stab me aren’t you..” Will struggled in the hard chokehold grip he was in.

Nicholas smirked at Will confusedly, “Huh. Ohh no no no.” He looked at the curved knife and smiled. “I’m gonna make her kill herself with it, just like how her father did to my sister.” He turned to look towards the battered girl. “Right Abigail?”

The girl struggled to find the strength to speak more than words to say. “M-Muh my father d-did not kill your sister Nicholas!”

“Oh yeah?.. I also trust that he didn’t kill Elise Nichols and 7 other girls who looked exactly just like you!” Nicholas screamed, not in anger, but in obvious pain this time.

“They should’ve never died.. It was supposed to be YOU! But they’re the ones who had to be sacrificed, just so you can be spared. Now, it’s your turn to pay your father’s dues Abigail. Finish what he has started, or I’ll do it myself.” Nicholas said vengefully while on the other hand, Will felt helpless each moment that passed by. He was literally trapped, and until he couldn’t do anything for the next few seconds he’s gonna be watching an innocent girl die and the next years of his life would be nothing but dread and trauma from this moment. So in a fight or flight instinct, Will mustered up all his strength and mindlessly kicked whoever was behind him by the groin with all his force. He proceeded to lash out on everyone in the scene like a wild beast just to prevent the girl whom he didn’t even know less than 5 minutes ago from taking her own life in front of a growing crowd. The people around them were starting to increase as the sun’s rays proceeded to disappear from the immense amount of watchers around them. Absolutely no one was doing anything to help the both of them, and Will felt like they were being betted on like fighters in a shallow cage brawl.

“STOP! No! Please put down the knife.”

“What’s the point in existing when everyone wants you dead.” Abigail replied as choked sobs escaped from her throat. Only a second before the knife could even gain contact with the

girl’s stomach, the jagged blade flew right out of her hands and into Will’s as he launched towards her. A look of disbelief painted Boyle’s face immediately and angered him further.

“You little.. I’m gonna fucking kill you!” Nicholas launched towards Will but before he knew it, he felt blood gushing out of his stomach as Abigail was the one to stab him instead. Will looked at Abigail not with shock, but with surprising relief.

“What have I done..” The girl looked down at the bloody mess painting her hands, and the lifeless body of Nicholas Boyle laying on the ground.

Chapter End Notes

damn.. canon divergence-ish stuff and a n g s t.

ALso y'all dw Hannibal's gonna appear soon hehehhe

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

BREAKING NEWS! Videos of a recent stabbing in Ravenstag University have been spread all across the internet like wildfire. The incident at hand occurred not even 24 hours prior to its posting and the clips have now been taken under investigation by the local Baltimore police and the FBI. We would like to warn viewers watching that unsettling content may appear throughout the short 45 second clip taken in the crime scene. Viewers have been warned.

"They should've never died.. It was supposed to be YOU! But they're the ones who had to be sacrificed, just so you can be spared. Now, it's your turn to pay your father's dues Abigail. Finish what he has started, or I'll do it myself" "STOP! No! Please put down the knife." "What's the point in existing when everyone wants you dead." "You little.. I'm gonna fucking kill you-

Frank denied what he saw. He paused the tv and leaned forward but by all odds he saw his son, fearful and lost for his life and it was shown on national television. Then he turned it off.

He paced around the hours or God knows how long but after a few minutes finally he heard the pickup truck parking in the garage. Before Will could even open the door, he already felt his father's rage as the door swung open.

"Hi dad. Delivered the fish to school." Will tiredly said and went in, not bothering to look at his father in the face.

Frank stood up from the couch, showing a look of horror as he saw his son looking like he fell down a pile of shit. "Will Graham! Where have you- Oh Jesus Christ, you look even worse in real life!"

"I guess you already knew huh."

"No shit your own bloodied face is on national television Will! How could I not know?!" Frank led him to the living room and turned the tv once more to show Will his own battered face on the news. All Will could do is sigh and roll his eyes at the sight of his pitiful face.

"I've had worse days." The boy sarcastically replied then dragged his heavy feet up the stairs

"Come back down here this instant Will Graham!"

"Oh yeah? What else do you need to know dad?! It's all on the news right? Y'know what I'm sick of this conversation I'm going to bed!"

“No you’re no-” Suddenly loud knocks on the door rang the entire house, stopping both of them in their tracks.

“No one’s here fuck off!” Frank Graham shouted but the banging just kept getting louder. He went to see through the peephole and saw two men dressed up in suits and shades as if they were the men in black.

“Didn’t I just say no one was he-”

“Is this where Will Graham lives?” The bigger of the two men interrupted and Frank couldn’t help feeling disrespected by it.

“Dad, what’s going on?”

“Searg we found him. Copy.” The smaller man spoke to his pager before immediately barging inside the Graham household

“Hey get the fuck out of here! Don’t you dare touch my son!” Frank shouted but the bigger man was able to restrain him with handcuffs and sat him down.

“Dad! Hey get the fuck off me!” The boy struggled as his arm was strongly held in the smaller man’s grip.

“Woah woah hey kid slow down would ya?. The name’s Frederick Chilton, head secretary of Ravenstag University and the big guy right there is Barney Matthews, my assistant. We just want to speak to you abou-”

“How great! And I thought this couldn’t get any worse! What the fuck do you want and how did you find me?”

“Alright alright well first of all, rude to not let me finish but hey you’re understandably upset so I’ll let it slide, and second, c’mon now you think we couldn’t find you after your face was plastered all over the news AND our campus?” Chilton rounded Will patronizingly, in his own house to place more salt in the wound. “Tsk tsk tsk I think you know better than that Mr. Graham, or maybe you don’t! Who really knows..” Will’s patience got thinner every second the smaller man talked.

“Anyways, I’ll try not to waste any more of your precious time so uhm- we want to take you in as our student Will Graham.” Will and Frank simultaneously stood up from their seats as a visible reaction to the offer.

“Uh-Excuse me?”

“You heard that right, Will. We want you in our scholarship program but under these conditions. You mustn't say anything to the press whether it be bad or good, nothing. at. all. until the FBI clears our name.” Chilton circled around the boy patronizingly.

“Are you kidding? No.” Will laughed in disbelief. But before he could say anything more, Barney brought two large cases and opened them to show stacks of cash laying neatly inside. Will’s eyes widened in shock while his father could only ever give the same reaction.

“That right there Mr. Graham is 2 million dollars, *in cash*-- and, before you say anything, we’ll give all of that and possibly even more to you and your business under the conditions that you cooperate with us to clear Ravenstag’s name by, obviously, being a student under us, thus-- *absolute compliance*.”

“Will, son, you don’t have to do this.” Frank desperately called out. As a father, he absolutely hated seeing Will so torn apart more than any other. In a way it also killed a part of him too. Though the offer is inexplicably an offer they can’t possibly refuse, he’d rather die than see Will’s freedom getting taken away from him. Will on the other hand, looked back and forth his father and the suitcases.

Chilton continued to round Will like prey. “Time is ticking Mr. Graham.”

“Fine! Fine I’ll do it.” Will hissed at the secretary.

“Will!”

“Dad, it’s my choice. It’s not yours to choose.” He took a pen that was hanging from Chilton’s breast pocket. “Plus I’m doing this for the business.”

Chilton gave a prideful smile and brought out a contract neatly tucked inside a manila envelope. “Very well then, now if you’d be a dear and just sign right here Will.”

“Don’t call me dear, asshole.” The boy sneered.

“Fantastic job Will. Oh and almost forgot,” The secretary snapped his fingers. “Barney please bring out and hand our *dear* Willy his things, his first day starts tomorrow.”

“Wait what?!” Will got up from his slumped position. “Wait wait wait so let me get this straight. You bastards think you can barge in my own home and suddenly play dictator in my own life the next moment?” He defensively snarled, but this did not faze Chilton at all who nonchalantly responded with a snide “mhm” Will was absolutely appalled with the man’s existence.

“But hey we’re not *that* inhumane so we’re not gonna let you drive 3 hours to the university everyday until this case is closed.” Chilton smiled. “So instead, my good man Barney would be fetching you in a *limo*, emphasis on limo by the way,” The man sarcastically mused. “At 5 am sharp tomorrow and then, you’d be staying in the university dorm along with covered expenses and such so yes, seems like a dream doesn’t it?” Will rolled his eyes. “But but but, you’ll be under our surveillance 24/7 until we clear you and don’t expect it to be soon so wish your best farewells to your father while you still can.” Chilton concluded. Will was contemplating on his decisions at this moment, but he couldn’t possibly back out, nor can he as a matter of fact. So all he could do is to simply shut up, sit still, and look pretty for the cameras coming his way in the next dreadful days awaiting him.

Chilton snapped his fingers at Will’s face. “Helloo? Earth to Will Graham. Did you just doze off?” He laughed, Will glared. “Anyways I won’t be wasting all your precious time, we’ll be leaving now and oh yeah, don’t be late. See you tomorrow, Will.” The secretary slammed the door shut, leaving the Grahams powerless in their own home.

Chapter End Notes

Even if I tried to amp up Chilton's ass-holery quite a bit it's not even over-exagerrated he is still exactly like this in the show LMAO.

AND AND BARNEY MATTHEWS! AAAAAA AA A :DDD

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"IT SHOULD'VE BEEN YOU!" Shadows screamed as they cornered Will in the back of an old cabin he wasn't familiar with. He turned to the window and saw his reflection, not actually his, it belonged to the bloodied face of Abigail Hobbs. "WHY US?!" The shadows screamed louder as faces of the murdered girls appeared one by one, and lastly Nicholas Boyle. Will drowned in their presence and shouted.

Will woke up from his sleep with jagged breathing and shouted, "AH! A-AH! HH". He clutched the surrounding blankets, relieved to realize that it was all a dream,, but it surely didn't feel like one. This was the first time he ever had a dream that's not in his own body, but in the body of a stranger he saw just 24 hours prior. He turned to his digital clock and it showed a dim 3:45 am on its screen. Naturally one would wait for another 30 minutes and go back to sleep but even as Will did that, he tossed and turned around his cramped bed and as he finally gathered up the strength to get up, the digital clock on his bedside now showed 4:30 which was the last push to prepare Will for his leave. He couldn't care less if he'd be late, he couldn't even care about going to the university at all. He'd rather run away to the deep depths of the forests and get lost than sell his soul to a university he couldn't care less for. 30 minutes later, the doorbell rang.

Outside was Barney, and standing behind him was an actual limousine, like the ones in Hollywood movies. Will was basking in the sight of it, since this was the first time he's seen one in real life, more so to ride in it. Will continued to stealthily peek through his room's shades but was eventually seen by Barney as he looked up. He tried to hide himself, but his cover was blown before he even could make one.

Fuck this. Will sighed, looking at the mirror and seeing the ever-so pretentious Ravenstag uniform on him.

Will sluggishly dragged his things down the stairs, not caring if they shook the entire house and abruptly opened the creaky front door to see Barney facing back, smoking a cigarette, "Didn't know you smoked too." He got out of the house then loaded his stuff on the hearse-esque car. Barney on the other hand warmingly laughed and offered Will a stick. "Why, do you?" Will tiredly looked him up and down, thinking if this was a test or not.

"Is this a test?" He thought out loud, causing another laugh from the older man.

"If I said no would you believe me?"

"No."

"Then yes, yes this is a test." Barney snidely remarked. But either way Will still grabbed the stick and lit it up with his own lighter. Though he didn't smoke that often, he still always

brought a lighter with him just in case special opportunities like this would come his way, and because he just liked setting things on fire, occasionally.

The boy leaned back on the back of the car with Barney and blew smoke rings carelessly. “My old man smokes, but he won’t let me even if I am technically a second hand smoker by default.”

“Isn’t your father awake yet?” Barney asked.

“No, he doesn’t usually wake up at this time, and I'd rather not wake him up or he’ll get in a mood.” Will grinned, stubbing out his cigarette not long after. “Besides, the man just told him to leave a letter before I left, which I did.” He said as he opened the trunk of the car and then brought out a small stuffed dog from his suitcase. Barney looked at the boy, amused.

“Aren’t you too old for stuffed toys?” The older man joked at the boy’s expense.

“Aren’t you too old to be alive?” Will gave an unamused look back towards the man before shutting the front seat door. All Barney could do is to scoff at the rebellious teenager.

“Y’know when I was your age I’d be skipping classes with my friends and smoking pot in the back of the school bleachers.” Barney recalled as he got in the car.

The boy on the other hand, looked out the cold window with a blank stare, “So?” He said, mindlessly drawing smiley faces on the forming fog.

“It’s just strange that here you are, a miserable run-off-the-mill 17 year old, with no life, no friends… and barely even a family. And now, after a whole turn of events, a whole university and possibly, the police force is suddenly watching your back like you’re the queen.” Will deflated in acceptance, expecting to hear the same demeaning things Chilton said to him the night before. “All because of a noble move no person nowadays would ever dare to do.” Barney added, catching Will off guard. He said nothing more, but this whole interaction was sadly the most meaningful conversation he had in probably the entire year. Will felt reassured and safe for the first time in what felt like forever.

The trip to Baltimore felt shorter than Will remembered it being, well considering he wasn’t the one driving this time round and he was fast asleep all throughout. But anyhow, Will found himself awake once again as they passed the dreaded “Welcome to Baltimore” sign just in time. Will was, obviously, already quite familiar with the place but he still felt so lost at that moment. His stomach churned just by the sight of the overly exaggerated entrance gates and out of all the universe’s luck, he saw the blonde student in the pretentious white fur coat get out of a limousine with a smaller girl whom he used as an armrest.

Will covered his eyes and sighed. Barney caught up on this and immediately assumed an obvious dreadful background between them. “Goddamn..” The boy cursed. “I assume you already have a warm introduction on Mason.” The older man sighed. Will looked out in dread.

“Don’t worry Graham. The kid’s notorious all around. In and out the university can you believe it?! I mean his entire subhuman of a family is, if i'm gonna be honest with you.” Will

looked back at him and asked, “Who are they?” then proceeded to look out again.

“The Vergers. Mm let’s just say that the devil’s bloodline opened up a meat packing company and decided to terrorize Baltimore for God knows what reason.”

“Clearly” Will unenthusiastically replied. “Who’s the other one?” He pointed out to the brunette girl with braids, which were getting enthusiastically pulled by Mason.

“Oh, her- uh, that's Margot, his *twin sister*.” Will was caught off guard, thinking they were lovers or even best friends from how close Mason was getting around her. “What? No way, you’re kidding. There is no way siblings or anyone with a sane mind get like- *that!”* He pointed.

“Yeah well not Mason. I told you, the kid’s a sub-human, a *psycho*.” He emphasized. “Poor girl’s got nothing to do about him.” The latter frowned, seeing the Vergers play this out ever so casually, in broad daylight. All Will could do was sadly and angrily watch them pass by as they left. A few minutes later, they arrived at the entrance to what looks like a 5 star hotel entrance, confusing Will.

“What- Where are we? Is this a fucking hotel?” The boy looked around in more confusion as chauffeurs, lobby boys, and even paparazzis scrambled around their vehicle. Barney in turn laughed at Will’s confusion, making him turn and look around in more cluelessness. “Why’re you laughing?” Will asked seriously.

“This *is* the dormitory, Will, it’s just a little,,different..from normal ones at least. Well after all this is Ravenstag.” Barney went down the car and unloaded Will’s luggage from the back seat. The boy still couldn’t wrap his head around that this was going to be his new home, or prison, so he thought, for as long as it took for the goddamned University to clear their already tinted name. Will stalled and took in the view he was seeing outside the small car windows, and from that perspective, the boy felt overwhelmed from the number of people swarming around the limo.

Then the door to his side suddenly opened in haste. “Brace yourself Graham and whatever these bastards ask you, Don’t. Say. Anything. Don’t look at them, don’t engage in them, and don’t even try to breathe in their direction. Got it?” Barney advised the boy strictly, resulting in a nervous nod from the latter. Right after he was pulled out of the car by the older man and quickly rushed into the building entrance as more and more journalists started to flock around them like seagulls. For a split moment, Will was completely blinded by the flashing lights from the cameras and almost fainted. But luckily enough, this was prevented by Barney’s arms supporting his shoulders. Then as they were right in front of the entrance, a journalist with curly, ginger hair suddenly blocked their way to the entrance.

“Hi my name’s Fredd-

“Get out of the way, Lounds.” Barney pushed the woman away, allowing Will to walk ahead first. But it was not enough to keep her away from Will and somehow the woman managed to get through past security, who were struggling to keep the swarm of paparazzis from getting in.

“Anyways.. Now isn’t it the famous or rather, *infamous*, Will Graham. Pleasure to meet you, the name’s Freddie Lounds.” Will scanned the strange lady and immediately looked back at Barney who was getting the luggage, looking equally as confused on how she got there without notice. “No thanks.” The boy sneered, but the damn woman still wouldn’t give in.

“Nope. Ain’t no way you’re touching the boy! Now get out of here Lounds, or-”

“Or what Matthews? You gonna get physical with a lady?” The woman slyly grinned. “Tsk tsk tsk, this would be such a story for my blog. Like just imagine *‘Breaking News!: Barney Matthews, Ravenstag bodyguard caught physically abusing beloved and innocent Tattlecrime journalist Freddie Lounds!’* Ugh what a great story, one snap and another taint for the university why not?” Freddie sarcastically stated. Will on the other hand looked down his phone and immediately saw his face plastered all over the news. Making him drop his phone in shock at the realization that this much publicity was gonna be stepping on his throat in the next few months. Barney and Freddie looked back at a distressed Will, which made Freddie try to take this to her advantage to get to the boy. “Are you alright, Mr. Graham?” She walked slowly towards the boy, but Barney knew exactly what Lounds was doing so he pulled her by her arm to keep her away from Will.

“Hey!” Lounds gasped.

“Not today Freddie, I’ll let them handle you.” He snapped his fingers to other two lobby boys guiding the front entrance now the swarm of paparazzis were almost completely gone. “No! I promise just one question and I’ll be out of your sight for the rest of your goddamned lives!” She shouted as she struggled with the men pulling her towards the exit.

“Have a good day.” Barney looked at the miserable woman one last time and finally placed his attention on Graham once again. “Well that was rough.”

Will meekly nodded “Mhm..”

As they got the documents signed by the lobby registrar, Barney immediately led him up the grand flight of stairs that looked like it belonged to a manor. Well as it looked right now, it looked like a weird hybrid of an old victorian manor and a modern hotel, which were two juxtaposing ideas in itself more so in an architectural concept. Will looked around to see a number of students in uniform going up, down and through the hallways with frantic and alienated glances towards him. At this point, from the number of cameras and flashing lights that were shoved to his face not an hour prior, a couple of weird stares and exchanged gossip were nothing to him at all. Then Barney stopped in front of a door, just right beside the grand balcony overlooking the university campus. As much as Will thought this school to be absolutely appalling, the view was of a different story and for once in a while he felt a small tinge of relaxation.

“Where is that girl?” Barney mumbled, knocking on the door.

“Yo Barney!” A girl waved across the hallway. “Sorry for the lag. hA- hold on a sec I’m tryna catch my breath. Anyways I thought I was meeting you in the lobby?” The girl added breathlessly.

“Oh yeah sorry about that Katz. Lounds was all over our backs so change of plans.”

“Ah, figured. Wait, now is this the famous Will Graham everyone’s dying to see?”

“In the flesh.” Barney nudged the boy, signaling to greet the latter. Will then glanced up at him in annoyance.

He sighed. “Hi.”

“Bev Katz. Pleasure.” She took out her hand for a handshake but Will only looked down and did not reciprocate the action.

“Hm he’s a shy one isn’t he?” Will’s eyes furrowed embarrassingly at the comment. Bev on the other hand, had a look of genuine intrigue and niceness for him, other than the fact she still looked at him like a rare fish in an aquarium.

The girl then scanned him up and down once more in genuine interest and smiled. “God he’s interesting isn’t he?” Bev said before taking his luggage and heading in the room, making Will scrunch up his face even further and put up an awkward smile. Will looked up at Barney and weakly pointed at the girl. “I-..”

“Don’t worry Will, it’s a compliment. Bev’s just quite different in her way of expressing things.” Barney reassured Will as Bev went back and forth the room carrying bags. They proceeded to go in the shared dorm and to Will’s further surprise, it was a two-storey room and had a mini chandelier on the ceiling. It actually looked like it could pass for a suite from the Hilton hotel.

“Oh my god-.” Will gasped, catching Barney and Bev’s attention as he roamed around the room mindlessly.

Barney smiled and sighed. ““Don’t worry kid, it happens to the best of us.”

“To the best of y’all or just the regular folk like me?” Graham sarcastically replied as he tampered around the small trinkets and baubles laying around the room that were probably more expensive than his house.

“Anyways, if you’re good now Will I’ll just leave you two to get settled..” Barney called out, disrupting Will’s attention from the room.

“Wait what?”

“I-I What do you mean what? You’re my roommate now.” Bev snorted.

Will's face softened again as the dawn of realization finally settled in him once again. The tenacity and outrageousness of the room that’s gonna be called his home for the next few months was enough for him to ever forget he was in a dorm house in the first place.

“O-oh yeah.. I forgot, my bad.” He proceeded to go up to the second floor of the dorm while Barney said his goodbyes to Bev. The door shut not long after and heard footsteps echoing by

the staircase. “Yo whatcha doin there Graham?” She asked, pointing at the books Will was fiddling with by the shelves.

“Just- Just looking.” Will continued to look down on what seemed like an anatomy book he randomly picked out just to avoid the requirement of being sociable.

“Well you do you man. If you wanna help me out, it’d be great. I’ll just be settling your stuff downstai-,”

“NO!- I mean- I could do it myself.” Bev jumped from the sudden, sharp change of attitude from Will.The boy shut his eyes in frustration with himself, thinking he now freaked out his new roommate from his lack of social cues. On the other hand, Bev eyebrows raised and a smirk grew on her face; definitely not the reaction Will expected from his random tantrum bout. “Oh- OH!” Bev exclaimed in excitement, causing the boy to involuntarily back away a bit. “You have some snuff shit hidden in there dude??” Will’s face scrunched.

“Uh-What?”

“Like you know pot, weed, cigarettes, all that shit!” A dawn of realization suddenly hit Will, causing a small giggle to escape his clenched teeth.

“Well, do you??” The girl shook him like a rag doll excitedly while Will’s laughter gradually echoed throughout the large room as Bev started to laugh as well. Will’s laughter was so contagious to the point where the girl began to tickle him to the ground just to hear more of those rare giggles. “Do you, or do you NOT have weed in your bag Mr. Graham?! This is the FBI speaking so what’s the culprit gonna be? Whatever you’re gonna say is gonna be legally used against you, you hear me!” The girl pinned him to the ground and teasingly interrogated him like an FBI agent.

“Let me go Bev! Not cool!” Will tried to hide his laugh but failed to do so. “Also, you said it wrong.” He added.

“Oh? Are you sassing me right now, *criminal*?!”

“You’re supposed to say-,’” Will stealthily flipped their positions around, causing a surprised grunt from Bev. “You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. And I mean, c’mon seriously? FBI agent yet doesn’t know the Miranda Rights? Tsk tsk Agent Katz, you should know better.” Boasted Will as he let go of the soft pin he had on the girl’s hands.

“And, no. I don’t have drugs in my bag for your information.” He concluded. Meanwhile, Bev just looked at him in genuine shock in her awkward laid down position Will left her at. The boy only looked back at her in silence as his heartbeat started to race, thinking that he accidentally hurt the girl.

Not a few moments later the girl instantly springed up to a crossed legged position in childish glee and said, “What the hell- that shit was so cool dude! Where the hell did you learn how to do all that?? Are you a fucking undercover agent??” Bev gawked at Will as he reverted back

to his reserved self, in relief. “Oh come on don’t be such a kill joy Graham! Right after that shit? seriously??”

Will gave a brief smile at the girl. “Police procedurals. Kinda dig them..” Bev’s eyes lit up. “Police procedur- oh my god this is the greatest day of my life.” Bev stood up and pranced around in ecstasy.

“Do you know how *difficult* it is to find someone who’s into that kinda shit?? Especially in this mess of a place?? God is real- he- or she must’ve answered my prayers for a right hand man!” She miraculously exclaimed like she won the lottery, slightly amusing Will. “And.. I saw the twin peaks pin on your bag, so absolute plus points.”

“Well I guess I’m your Truman from now on forward.” Graham referenced, making Bev’s grin widen like a half moon.

“No- you’re Dale Cooper, I’m Truman. I mean considering you are a seriously **the** personification of the underdog who-secretly-knows-otherworldly-crap trope. You’re definitely a Cooper to me.” Their smiles both grew in sync as they finally both found a bond within each other.

Chapter End Notes

Bev-Will world domination! Also I promise ya fav cannibal's gonna appear soon,, just wait and see. ;]

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

BZZZ.. BZZZ.. BZZZ- “gODDAMNIT!” Will smashed his alarm clock with full force. Pausing for a moment, he tiredly looked at his palm which was covered in droplets of blood on the bed side table. He could only roll his eyes at the view and laid his head back on the pillow below him-- until he abruptly looked up and realized what time it was from the decimated alarm clock sitting beside him.

5:30 am-- he read, before rushing out of his bedroom and out to the main room. He stopped for a second from the amount of vertigo he was experiencing then proceeded to look for Bev panickedly. “Woah, woah! W-What are you doing??” An obviously irritated Bev emerged from her room, squinting at Will.

“Bev. D-Don’t we have school today??” Will looked back at the latter like a little child, who looked at him back in a mix of annoyance and confusion. “W-Wha- No? What are you on about? You don’t even a schedule Graham and it’s a Saturday…go back to bed. I can’t fucking believe you woke me up for nothing-” Bev shut the door hard, echoing the hallway. Not a second later, it reopened as the girl reminded, “but we do have a campus tour later, s-so just go back to sleep dude, and, don’t wake me up again. Got it?” She slammed the door once more, but a little harder this time to signal at her annoyance at the boy for waking her up.

At this point Will’s mind was already set in full motion so obviously, laying on his bed wasn’t an option to do for the time being. He figured and decided to go for a walk around the campus by himself, making sure to slip a note under Bev’s room in hopes of not getting on her bad side even further. If down the empty halls of the dorm house wasn’t anxiety inducing enough, the silence and stillness in the air was enough to make Will’s ears bleed. So naturally, he walked as briskly and quietly as he possibly can hoping to not greet anyone on his way out. As soon as the cold wind hit his face, a wave of relief washed over him but also gave him the realization that he was wearing only a night robe and a pair of open slippers which was definitely not ideal for the hypothermic weather.

“Goddamnit.” He cursed to himself. Not wanting to go back to the room, he stayed at the lobby couch and dissociated for a while until the winter chill crept up his legs, creating goosebumps. “I should get back.” He muttered under his breath until another boy waved and looked his way.

“Hey, you must be Will Graham. I hope I’m not mistaken or I’ll curl up in embarrassment and die.” The boy joked. Will only looked at him in confusion and hesitantly nodded.

The latter gave a comforting smile and raised his expressive brows “It seems like you don’t know either. You alright? It’s weird seeing anyone up this early.” He replied.

“Mhm.” Will looked away.

“Well…” The latter looked around the room. “I hope I’m not making you uncomfortable or anything.” He smiled once more, making Will lose his eye contact. “Ah, I’m sorry to be rude, I’m Matthew Brown by the way. Uh, I just finished making my rounds at the hospital so that’s why I’m coming back so late.. or way too early, technically .” He smiled again and reached his hand out. The latter gave a slightly hesitant shake, still not giving eye contact. For a few seconds, they only remained in silence in each other’s company until Matthew saw the little jitters Will’s hands and legs were giving out. He smiled again.

“Really? Only a robe and flip flops in this time of year? You must be living in a different state.” Matthew joked.

“That’s because I am from a different-.” Will sharply rebutted but discontinued mid-sentence as Matthew’s eyebrows raised. “A-a lot was in my mind. I just needed some air out.”

“Oh so you can talk?”

“Look if you’re here to throw me a bunch of shit at me then you should’ve just told me to lea-,” Will’s body deflated as Matthew’s interrupted by throwing his jacket on his lap.

“There. Wear it. Looks like you’re gonna die from hypothermia before I leave your sight.” Matthew said before walking away. Will, still confused on the other hand looked back and called back at him. But before he could, he was already gone. On the other hand, he could only touch the fabric of the jacket gently before wrapping it around his freezing legs. Not long after he finally decided to get back, he proceeded to fall asleep on the living room couch as he arrived.

Bev’s familiar voiced ringed around Will’s dreams repeatedly until he realized it was not. So he abruptly sat up on the surprisingly comfortable couch in panic.

“Well well look at the sleeping beauty, finally awake after one fucking hour of trying to wake you up! I actually thought you were dead Will goddamn I didn’t know your sleep patterns were full blown comas!” Bev shouted as Will’s head pounded profusely from the sound of screeching nails to his brain.

She noticed the oddly new jacket wrapping around Will as a blanket and snatched it. “And who’s jacket is this?” Will stood up immediately and fortunately grabbed it back from the girl’s grip before she accidentally destroys it. “Fuck! It’s mine Bev!” Will cursed as he proceeded to fold it, until Bev quickly snatched it back from his grip in annoyance.

“Really Will? A jacket that has psych ward printed on it? Belongs to you?” Bev raised her eyebrows, unimpressed, as she turned the beige bomber jacket around to show the latter.

“Don’t even try bothering to make up a lame excuse Will. These kinds of jackets belong to med students, and I would know since I obviously stayed here longer than you. And clearly, you just don’t know how to read. So tell me what’s up or I’ll tickle it out of you. Your choice man, tsk tsk..” The girl smirked, trapping Will into a mental corner which made the latter surrender.

“Fine fine. I took a walk out then some random student that just confronted me outta nowhere just started giving it to me.”

“Woah woah hold on.. Were you naked or-,”

“Jesus Christ Bev I wore what I’m exactly wearing right now!” He waved his arms up and down.

“So a robe and some slippers?” Will pinched the bridge of his nose and gave a sharp sigh. “Yes Bev..”

“Oh thank fuck. I CANNOT let you have another scandal again.” Bev gave a half sincere laugh of relief while Will just rolled his eyes. “Anyways, who’s the Good Samaritan?”

“Some med student named Matthew.” The girl’s eyes widened like saucers, as Will scanned her up and down in confusion.

“Matthew Brown?” She interrupted.

“Y-Yeah..” Bev’s jaw dropped as she took a seat beside the boy.

“Are you fucking serious? You don’t know how much of low blows he and his friends are. Just hope you never come across any of them anymore. You can’t keep getting into school scandals Will you hear me?” She grabbed the beige jacket from the floor and shoved it hastily to Will’s chest. “You promise me to get rid of this shit. Throw it, bury it, burn it, do whatever for all I care. Just promise me to never keep it with you, this shit’s already giving me bad vibes just by looking at it man.” She scoured at the sight of it and turned away, rolling her eyes.

Will on the other hand, just sat in silence, more confused than ever by Bev’s deal with the man. He looked down at the jacket once more and gripped it tighter this time. “Yeah yeah whatever, I promise.” He insincerely said, not wanting to continue the conversation.

“Get up and get ready man. Campus tour is in 2 hours.” Bev called out. “Also, we have to be careful, a shit ton of paparazzis are gonna be waiting in the open to try to get a bite out of you. So just make sure to wear extra clothes to cover you up--also since it’s actually fucking freezing outside.” She warned while a half teasing smirk plastered her face. “Seriously though, so you stay with me at all times unless I say otherwise, got it?” Will nodded half heartedly.

After one and a half hours of laying around, pacing the room, and drinking countless amounts of coffee, Will finally decided to freshen up and get ready for the most anticipated campus tour. The thought didn’t make Will have positive thoughts or feelings-- only dread. But of course, from yesterday forward, he no longer had full control over his schedule; or any control as a matter of fact in his own goddamn life. Will didn’t take much long to finish after Bev and just threw on whatever he saw first in his closet which was a white tank top, a green bomber jacket, and a light green button up blouse his dad gave to him before leaving. He also took and hid Matthew’s beige jacket in a backpack to give back. The familiar scent of his home coating his clothes were enough to make him crawl up right there and then and wait for

a year to pass to finally leave and get back to his normal life. But this is his life now. He can't escape his own life, and that was the sad reality of it.

Will took one more look at himself at the mirror and sighed-- "Will!" His thoughts interrupted by the sound of his roommate shouting his name at the top of her lungs, he knew he had to get going before his mood deteriorated even further.

"Ready?" Bev asked.

Will sighed "Yeah."

Chapter End Notes

Oooo Matthew brown and sweaty encephalitis man? I hope they don't get caught on by a pretentious cannibal!

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

For about 3 hours, Bev and Will roamed around the cold campus endlessly which naturally tired them out. So they sat around the library stairs and had the idea to get coffee. But the problem was, the nearest university coffee shop was a 20 minute walk away. So they proceeded to reason out at each other for the the next minute until someone volunteered to do so.

“Fine fine I’ll go get them.” Will grunted, standing up from the concrete steps as Bev smiled victoriously.

“You’re so good to me William.” She laughed. “Oh yeah, just plain black coffee. Black as the skies on a moonless night.” Bev joked, making Will snort from the reference.

“Pretty black then.” He replied back as they both laughed in synch.

“…or just tell them the Katz regular, they’ll know.” Bev professionally reminded again before he left.

Unsurprisingly, Will took almost 30 minutes just to find the coffee shop and almost got lost along the way. The campus was almost completely deserted at this time, only a few students coming in and out the buildings.

Thankfully, the coffee shop appeared in sight as the anxiety began to creep through his system. Though the campus was half deserted, the coffee shop was surprisingly packed with students who were either working tirelessly or just hanging out. It wasn’t long til it was his turn in line and his eyes widened at the sight of Matthew being his barista.

“Matthew?” The taller latter looked up in surprise after writing the previous customer’s name on a cup.

“Will! Wow, can’t believe we meet again.”

“What’re you doing here?”

He sighed “Thank student loans and all that jazz right? Thus, a part time job.” He replied enthusiastically with a slight tired tone. “Anyways what can I get for ya?” Matthew greeted and placed on his classic smile, which Will found surprisingly comforting.

“Just 2 black coffees, thanks.” Will paused, and looked over the lone cherry pie sitting at the pastry display window. “And the cherry pie too. Thanks.”

“Alrighty, that’ll just be 5 dollars for both coffees and the cherry pie’s on the house.” Will looked up confusedly.

“Seriously?” He stared back at the latter with slight disbelief and pointed up the menu. “It’s 5 dollars for a single cup of coffee and your only charging me that for all?

“Don’t worry, it’s on the house, my treat. Just, don’t tell anyone.”

“Plus a free cherry pie? Isn’t that a little overkill for a treat?” Will laughed as he brought out his worn out wallet. “You should at least let me give you a 6 for a tip.” Matthew only smirked back charmingly and proceeded to prepare his order as Will gave out a sincere smile at him. Will’s heartbeat slowed down and intensified as his eyes only focused on the latter who unfortunately looked more attractive than he already while being busy behind the counter.

Still unknowingly staring at Matthew, the latter noticed and winked back at him which made him immediately look away and tempted his face grew hotter by the second. After 5 minutes, he heard his name being enthusiastically called out by Matthew. He usually hates overly gleeful or just generally loud people, but for some reason Matthew Brown was an exception.

“Thanks Matthew.” He smiled as he reached out to receive the coffees and a brown paper bag containing the cherry pie. Almost dropping them, he suddenly remembered to give back his jacket which was placed in his backpack. “Oh yeah almost forgot, here’s your jacket.”

“Nah its alright you could keep it, I insist.” Matthew gave it back to the latter as he handed the cups of coffee as well.

“But-“

“Keep it Will. So you wouldn’t forget to wear extra clothing, especially in this kind of season.” The taller man joked, catching a small laugh from the latter. Will really wanted to insist to give it back, but something in him doesn’t want to either. In casual fashion and in order to not stall Matthew from his job, he didn’t argue any further and just said thank you and his goodbyes before leaving. The brief interaction was almost enough to make Will’s day, and it desperately baffled Will. For now, his only agenda was getting back to Bev.

The trip back was unsurprisingly shorter than the trip to the coffee shop; even if he missed a couple turns and almost got lost again during the first few minutes of finding his way back. Nonetheless, he finally found Bev migrated sitting under one of the park trees. “Bev!” He called out.

“Dude where the hell have you been?! I couldn’t contact you for shit! And the goddamn paparazzis almost caught up to me.” Bev shouted back. Will shrugged it off and gave an almost lukewarm and half-full coffee to Bev, who was further annoyed by it.

Bev looked at her cup disgustingly as she noticed the obvious coffee spills covering the white cup and the noticeable lightness of her order. “Seriously dude? You should’ve just bought me an empty cup instead of serving me this crap.” Will rolled his eyes. “Well next time you be the one who gets lost in the cold for 30 minutes to find a stupid coffee shop just to get warmly thanked back by a bastard tour guide. Be my guest.” He rebutted, sipping his still warm coffee nonchalantly. Bev only gave a small *“tsk”* sound out of annoyance.

“Oh yeah here.” Will handed the girl the paper bag. “What’s this? I swear to God if you brought a paper bag full of trash I’ll fucking spill your coffee all over yo-“

“It’s cherry pie.” The boy looked a revved up Bev up and down with a small smirk on his face before taking a sip of his still hot coffee. “And it’s the last one.”

On the other hand, Bev aggressively took the paper bag from Will’s hands and opened the small carton box containing the pie without care and physically tried to fight the smile growing on her face.

“Whatever Graham, let’s get back.” Bev stopped for a second before proceeding to give Will an aggressive noogie, messing up his annoyingly perfect curls and making him accidentally drop his coffee. Bev laughed and was in complete joy at this sight of a disheveled Will, but it was the complete opposite for the latter.

Though irritant, he felt like he deserved it for bringing an half empty and cold coffee back to the girl. But to get even, he placed down his coffee cup on an empty bench and playfully tickled Bev to the grass which made her ultimately drop her coffee as well but thankfully was able to set the cherry pie aside before getting toppled down-- though this time, it didn’t turn out well for anyone as it completely toppled and spilled over someone else’s seemingly expensive shoes. “Oh shit.” Bev looked up and saw an overly-well dressed man with slicked back hair and two other people surrounding him.

“Are you really gonna let them get away with that Lecter?” The shorter blond haired man to his left called out and laughed at the sight of a disheveled Bev laying on the sidewalk.

Lecter.. He silently repeated his name, and looked back up with shock as he remembered the man who insulted his father during the telephone call back in Wolf Trap.

Chapter End Notes

and so it begins...

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will heard laughter around him and Bev as embarrassment spilled over him like his cup of coffee all over his shirt. “Bev let’s get outta here.” Will pulled her close to him but was too late as a bigger and broader man with a skinhead haircut aggressively restrained his arms and the short blonde took the girl to his side. “Look who we have here, it’s Beverly Katz!” He exclaimed as he squeezed her face. "Also how's Price and Zeller? Haven't heard of them since they got their asses beat by Francis!" Bev tried to scream but was covered by Mason's mouth. The blonde then looked back at Will surprisingly and gave out an even bigger smile. “HA! And the famous Will Graham! The dynamic duo it seems!” He sadistically laughed.

“Get off me Mason! Don’t you dare touch him!” Bev shouted, attempting to elbow him in the stomach but was caught by the latter who proceeded to hold her by the arms. Will looked at him with wide sets of eyes and began to remember that this was the same Mason whom he saw disgustingly violate his sister during his ride with Barney.

“Let her go Mason.” The last and the most put together member coldly said. “Seriously Hannibal?” Mason scoffed, but immediately let Bev go as the taller and much more intimidating latter stared at him with clear malice. Will was shocked by this and crossed sharp gazes with Hannibal. After a few seconds of gazing at each other, the taller man looked away and back at Bev who was now laying once more on the ground after getting thrown by Mason.

“You.” He pointed. Bev stared up with a mix of anger and disgust but was ultimately overridden with fear, making her look down. Hannibal smirked at the sight of a helpless Bev and stared back at the sight of Will, who was now breathing deep breaths out of fear and fury. Will felt like his teeth were gonna break from grinding them too much as he looked back at a smirking Hannibal. He knew the latter was about to say something so cruel, so he braced himself for the worst.

“Will Graham right?” Hannibal taunted, but Will didn’t give anything in return. “Look at me Graham.” He said sternly this time.

“Why should I?” A restrained Will rebutted, still not maintaining eye contact with the man. Suddenly, Will felt his face get forcefully pulled by Hannibal, who wasn’t taking any more of his resistance. The former tried hard to look away but was only pulled back aggressively to face Hannibal once he did. So he gave up and challengingly stared back at him.

Will then weakly said, “Why are you doing this?”, as he looked over at the sight of a beaten up Bev being restrained by Mason.

“It’s because it’s rude to spill food and ruin another person’s shoes without any reason.” Hannibal calmly explained, as a small group of people slowly started to gather around them.

“So you don’t think what you’re doing right now is rude?” Will asked, weakly looking at the man. “Just let her go man, I’ll do whatever you ask me to. Just let her go.” Hannibal smiled at the offer and almost immediately agreed. “Alright then. Mason, let the girl go. Let’s see what we can do with the boy.” Mason laughed, tossing Bev once more to the ground like a rag doll. “Will!” The girl shouted but was interrupted by Mason giving her a smack to the face. “Shut up woman!” The blonde shouted. Will flinched as he saw this and couldn’t watch his friend being abused like that. So he looked back at Hannibal to avoid tearing up on the spot, which would give them more reason to go harder on him.

“Since you, low lives muddied my shoes, I expect you to clean them.”

“Fine! Done! I’d get you new pairs even. I-,”

“Are you richer than me?” Hannibal interrupted as Will looked back up in confusion. “I-What?”

Lecter only scoffed at the boy’s cluelessness. “These shoes are probably more than everyone’s tuition here combined.” A nonchalant sigh was let out. “So let me ask you again. Are you richer than me?”

Will’s blood was boiling over at this point and he can no longer control himself. From being beaten up, watching his only friend in the school get violated, and to getting insulted for his mere presence in the cultish university was more than enough to tip him over. But for the sake of Bev, he tried to maintain what little is left of his patience. “What do you think asshole?” Will spat back, amusing Hannibal.

The taller man put his left shoe forward. “Lick it.” He said, resulting in horrified looks from Bev and Will and only chuckles from Mason and the man who let go of restraining Will. Bev looked at Will with panic and mouthed a *“no”* as she frantically shook her head. Will knew that even if he didn’t want to, he had to; for both of their sakes and safety. Inevitably, he proceeded to kneel down slowly to the taller man’s feet and suddenly stopped for a few seconds before sucker punching the man straight in the face, toppling him over, visibly stunning the scene. Hannibal only looked back at the latter with amusement and only smiled back as he licked his bloodied mouth. Horrified at the sight, Will swiftly ran towards Bev who was now standing and ran away as fast as they could, before getting caught up on. “Francis, Mason!” Hannibal called out as he lay bloodied on the grass, still slightly dazed by Will.

“Hannibal! What the hell is the matter with you?!” Mason shouted.

“I said stop!” Hannibal shouted back, smirking by what he has planned in his mind. “Don’t you trust me Mason?” He taunted.

“Lecter you have been on my nerves for about the entire day. So if you don’t” Hannibal stood from the ground, towering over Mason who backed up in defense. “Do you think you have any power over me in this school? In this town even?” The taller man asked, keeping stern eye contact with the defeated latter. “I have something figured out.”

“Sure you do-“

“And, you have no say in this Verger.” Mason rolled his eyes.

“Give me everything about the boy.”

Chapter End Notes

welp.. Hannibal's a cheesy 80s movie bully. LMAO

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The pregnant silence in between Will and Beverly suffocated them both as they sat on the carpeted floors of their dormitory in awkward pause, while bandaging themselves up and placing frozen meat on bruises that were formed from the chaos not an hour before.

“So.. is no one gonna say anything about what the fuck just happened earlier?” Beverly sighed, having the rare feeling not wanting to have eye contact with Will from the shame and embarrassment that manifested in the moment. Will only shook his head as his ruffled curls covered his watercolor eyes.

After a few moments of silence, Will spoke up with a coarse voice. “I’m sorry about your cherry pie.” Beverly finally looked back at Will and saw teardrops falling on his wounded knees and immediately came to comfort the tired boy as she wrapped her arms around his head in comfort, like the older sister he never had. “Don’t worry kid, we’ll get em’ again next time.” She softly whispered as she ran her fingers through the boy’s cherubic curls. For once in his life, he felt some concrete sense of security in another, which made his heart ache and glassy tears to form. Not once did Will speak, mumble, squeak, or even make a sound in the time that Bev was by his side.

Will felt his eyes puff up as he opened them. He found themselves still sitting in the exact same position they were last in from hours ago but the sun no longer shined through the silk curtains of their shared dorm. Will looked at his left and still felt Bev’s arm wrapping around his shoulder as her head constantly drooped and retracted itself back up again, as if she was waiting for Will to wake up and be okay again. A pang of sadness welled up inside the boy but it wasn’t enough to make him cry anymore, thankfully. So instead, with his remaining strength left, he carried his friend bridal style to her room and laid her in her own bed before covering her with the silly pattern quilt that she owned which Will found slightly adorable. That was the least he could do after all the time Bev spent by his side.

Though Will felt more relieved by the knowledge that Bev was safe now, he still couldn’t help but think what would happen to him, and especially her in the upcoming dreaded days ahead. Considering that Hannibal Lecter knows them by now. Would they be tortured? Lynched? Hanged? All the possibilities flew through Will’s aching head which ultimately worsened his vision til he collapsed from the analysis paralysis that placed him on desperate chokehold.

I’M GONNA KILL YOU! Will’s woke up abruptly as he heard Nicholas Boyle’s voice suddenly hover over him and an image of the bloodied girl’s shadow flashed in his dark room for a slight second. He found himself drenched in sweat, still in his uncomfortable jeans and plaid shirt, from what seemed like a millisecond of sleep. But when he turned to his clock, he saw that 5 hours has passed and the sun was beginning to rise once more. After a few minutes of tranquil, abrupt knocks gradually intensified as Will left it be, having no intention of

interacting with anybody but himself. But of course, he also had to think about Bev. So in what probably is one of the last pieces of goodness in his heart, he answered the door.

“Goddamn! I said hold o-“ He looked at an unfamiliar and intimidating man standing in his doorway. Though the man was no taller than him, he still felt his presence suffocate him in the worst way possible. The man then proceeded to show a badge which Will almost immediately recognized to be the FBI’s, making his eyes widen at the sight of it.

Chapter End Notes

okok so I know I said I'd post the next 4 chapters next week but I'm one impatient mf so here ya go.

also this chapter's kinda short but.. Bev-Will a n g s t and fluff ajwbdhawhdb their friendship's just too precious to glaze over.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Hi sorry to interrupt but are you Will Graham? We’re the-.”

“Yeah.. Why?” He eyed them up and down. “I’m guessing you guys are the FBI?” He motioned to the other woman behind him who was dressed cleanly, in a sharp cut tweed blazer and a pencil skirt.

“Yes we are the FBI. I’m Special Agent Jack Crawford, head of the behavioral science unit in the bureau and this is my trainee Special Agent Clarice Starling. We’re just here to ask you some questions about the Hobbs case if you don’t mind.” Jack gave a small smile back at him with obvious intention to loosen him up, but Will saw through it and was hesitant to do so, resulting in a small pause of silence.

Before he could say something, he heard Bev’s door open and her calling out for him in a disheveled woken up form. “Will! Who’s at the door?” She carelessly asked out, yawning and stretching as she did so before her brows furrowed in confusion at the sight of the strangers. “Oh hello.” The girl looked back at Will. “Who are they?”

Jack sighed as got out his badge again and showed the girl whom audibly gasped at the sight of it before glancing over to Will with huge sets of eyes. “They’re the FB-!” Will instantly went to her and covered her mouth as the realization made her voice got louder by a thousand amperes, causing doors to be opened and heads peeking out from the corridors. Will sighed and shook his head. “Go sit on the couch.” The agents swiftly got in and discreetly shut the door, careful not to draw anymore unwanted attention. Will on the other hand, finally uncovered Bev’s mouth and gave out a sharp breath at her as she mouthed a “what” to him.

“So, what do you guys want?” Will shook his head and carelessly sat down on the ottoman chair in front of them, making Bev nudge him on the head. The girl laughed nervously. “Do you folks want anything? Water? Coffee? Tea? Juice? Anything? We have it al-“

“Coffee would be nice.” Special Agent Crawford interrupted as he looked at the trainee who nodded in agreement. “2 cups of plain black if you wouldn’t mind.” He smiled back at the girl who enthusiastically nodded back.

“Got it Special Agent.” She swiftly said before rushing to the kitchen. Will looked back at her and sighed in bewilderment.

“Anyways, we’re not here to waste your time Mr. Graham so I’m just gonna get straight to the point. So about the Hobbs case, considering its severity locally and nationwide as the bureau is now involved, we definitely feel like this is the last straw in terms of this school’s notoriety.” Will’s eyes furrowed as he maintained strong curiosity at the man.

“You see Mr. Graham, we’ve been eyeing this university ever since it opened considering the amounts of disappearances and murders that have been happening and may be possibly linked to this place. So not only does our guy Garret Jacob Hobbs’ daughter study here but now, numerous cold cases are now being opened again ever since the release of that video, in which you were in might I add, is spreading like wildfire all over the news.”

“So you want me to spy for you guys?” Will said nonchalantly as Bev put down their coffees on the table and shoved a cup as well in his hand. Jack was surprised by the boy’s sharpness and only laughed in astonishment.

“Well yeah technically yes. But don’t worry Mr. Graham, you'll get compensated for it.” Jack whispered something to the trainee before getting out her suitcase and giving him a contract to read and hopefully sign.

Special Agent Starling pointed at the contract. “Uh- Mr. Graham so we hope this operation doesn’t go for more than a year but all we ask of you are monthly updates and insights in this university and if anything goes wrong to you, just tell us immediately and we’ll take care of it behind the curtains.” The boy’s eyes slightly fluttered from the last sentence, remembering the day before which Agent Starling immediately caught on. “Has... anything happened to you recently?” She asked in genuine concern while Will’s eyes were glued on the contract.

“No.” Nothing more was said. Bev overheard and only glanced at Will from the background before walking away. “You from West Virginia Agent Starling?” He asked, changing the subject. Clarice Starling looked back at him with surprise and nodded. “You too?”

“Nah, I’m from Virginia, Wolf Trap, though. But I know a neighboring state when I hear one.” He joked. For a few minutes, sounds of pages being flipped echoed through the room before Will sighed and shook his head.

“Life insurance, medical insurance, insurances, insurances, insurances...” He flipped the pages irritably. “Is there anything else for your compensation to me that’s *not* insurance? I mean considering I’m going in the frontlines for you guys.”

Jack smirked. “Well, I know how much you dread this place so possibly, if our operation goes well and we’ve got all the strong evidence behind the bureau’s back, this university gets shut down and the Lecters would be placed in custody. All of them.” A glow in Will’s face brightened as he imagined the FBI getting rid of this hellscape and the devil’s second coming, Hannibal Lecter. *All of them.*

“The Lecters are known for years to be business criminals and frauds.” Starling added in a thick southern accent. “Its tycoon Aras Lecter to be quite exact. But all cases were all swept under the rug because of the court’s lack of concrete evidence. So ever since, the bureau had sharp eyes for the family.”

“I’ve heard that they also had sweatshops stationed in Yugoslavia and Lithuania during the 80s. I mean they’re all rumors and stuff but is there a possibility that’s real?” Will looked back at the agents in curiosity.

“We’re not really supposed to be disclosing federal information but I guess all we could say is that it’s not fully wrong.” Starling replied back while Will nodded. The boy looked back at the contract and considered for a few seconds before ultimately deciding to sign it. “Do you guys have a pen?” Special Agent Crawford smiled as Clarice handed Will a brand new Parker pen. Not long after, Will handed them the contract back and slouched back on his chair.

“So when do we start?” He asked as took a sip of his now lukewarm coffee. Special Agent Starling brought out a small box which contained a gadget that Will recognized to be a pager.

“A pager?”

“Yes Mr. Graham. It’s also a tracker so we know your whereabouts and such. Also so we could get updates from you firsthand in case. So you’d have to bring this with you everywhere you go.” Will scanned the gadget and scoffed. “C’mon a pager? I mean it looks cool and stuff but isn’t it better to use a cellphone for contact?”

“Yes we are getting to that.” Clarice then brought out a brand new apple phone and handed it to Will. “Here’s the phone you’d use from now on for contacting us. It has been especially programmed by our tech team to be used for only contacting the bureau and only that. So even if you try to take the chip, SIM card and hard drives out, we’d still have full contact with it. But you don’t have to use it for your regular use.” Starling added.

“I mean if ever I’d lose this phone can I just get your guys’ personal contacts just in case?” Will shrugged as they agreed to do so. After exchanging contacts, both agents stood up and thanked Will for the smooth operation.

“You’re a sharp kid Mr. Graham I really hope you understand what this is for.” Jack reached his hand out to shake Will’s. The boy gave a brief smile and shook his hand before saying goodbye on their way out.

Chapter End Notes

A wild Jack Crawford and Clarice Starling has appeared!

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

While clearing the cups from the coffee table, Will saw a freshly showered Bev leaning by the kitchen counter with a towel wrapped around her head while she scanned with the pager they gave him. “So you a Special Agent now too Will?” She joked, still gawking at the gadget. Will weirdly looked back at her ravishing the thing as he finished washing the cups.

“It’s just a gadget Bev.” He snatched the pager out of the girl’s hand and carelessly tossed it up and down like it was a toy before Bev snatched it back aggressively. “Graham! I swear to God you are the most careless person I’ve ever met. Just tossing a bureau given gadget like that, tsk.” She shook her head, holding the gadget as if her life depended on it.

“Whatever, you can have it if you care about it so much.” He shrugged tiredly. “I’m taking a shower.”

“Hurry up though we’re meeting Barney in an hour!” She reminded, getting a faint “what” from Will as water droplets echoed from the bathroom.

“Yeah he just texted me. He said it’s urgent or whatever.” Bev looked back at her phone and reveled through the pager.

Will, still fresh from the shower and dressed in the first things he could find in his closet, immediately ran out following his friend as Barney's car was waiting and beeping viciously at the front of the dorm house. Bev waved enthusiastically as she usually does but Barney’s blank facial expression instantly juxtaposed her energy which Will sensed immediately after seeing him. He felt something wrong was about to happen again, or was already happening as they spoke.

“Get in. Now.” The older man said, immediately making them scramble to get in. Bev called shotgun. Will sat miserably in the backseat.

“You seem grumpier than usual.” Bev stated. Barney didn’t say anything but showed a video from his phone which taped the fight from yesterday which the girl almost completely forgot about while Will’s lips quivered on the other hand.

“What the-" The girl looked back at Will who was now looking out the window miserably “Barney you don’t understand-“ She tried to explain but was cut off by the man’s assertive voice, almost rumbling the entire interior of the limousine.

“Beverly, you don’t understand the danger this may have put you in!” Bev gawked in disbelief.

“How the hell was it our fault when those sons of bitches were the ones who started it! Over a piece of pie soiling Lecshit’s shoe?! Un-fucking-believable!”

“Language Katz.” He reminded.

“And you, Will.” He looked back. “You should have never punched Hannibal. You don’t know how insane that kid could get and you don’t wanna know how I’m telling you trust and believe me.”

“And what? Just do as he’s told? Is that what you’re saying?!” The girl exclaimed while Will only continued to stare blankly out the foggy window.

“I’m saying, there are other ways to get out of the shit you guys were in. Like have you ever thought of running? I mean considering the crowd may have slowed them down if you actually did!” Bev looked away in disbelief. “But that’s besides the point.” Barney reiterated.

“My point is, Lecter doesn’t usually get attached to regular people he likes to step on. They’re all playthings to him.” The older man added. “But what he does like is to tamper with people like Will.” What the hell does that mean? Will thought to himself. “And he’ll make you overcompensate for it as much as possible. So I’m only telling you this to keep you safe so this is my first and final warning or so help me god.”

“P-People like me, what does that mean?” Will looked at Barney through the rear view mirror.

“Those who are not easy to get hold of is what I mean. And you are a clear target for Lecter as much as the video shows.” Will looked back down and fought back a smile being formed on his face from the memory of sucker punching Hannibal Lecter in the face.

“So what now?” Will tiredly blinked.

Barney sighed. “We’re on our way to the dean.” Bev and Will looked at each other with owl-like eyes as the car continued to drive.

“You can’t be serious Barney.” The girl stated, not getting anything from the man. “Oh my god. I can’t believe this is actually fucking happening. I thought you wouldn’t let anything happen to us Barney! Shit. My parents are gonna kill me if I get expelled! What about Will?! Let me out! Let us out!” Bev panicked, almost shaking the entire car but was immediately stopped by Barney’s rumbling voice echoing the car once more.

“I’m not Bev! Relax. They can never kick you out that easily. And for Will, I’ve got him all covered. So relax and stop shaking this car cause we’re almost there.” As they arrived at the lecture hall which housed the dean’s office, Will’s heart raced as he saw Hannibal and another man he couldn’t identify sat accordingly through the wooden window blinds.

“Graham.” Barney called out to a frozen Will Graham, who only looked back at him with obvious fear in his eyes. Bev stared back at him worriedly and approached him.

“I-I can’t do this Bev. I need to g-“

“No you don’t.” The girl grabbed his face and reassured him. “I don’t wanna do this either but it’s not only us who’s in trouble.” They both stared at Lecter, who glanced back at them

briefly.

“Whatever happens to you, I’ll always be by your side. Got that Graham?” Will stared back at her with a tinge of courage manifesting in his eyes and nodded. They all proceeded to go into the wide office and Will immediately noticed Secretary Chilton sitting beside Hannibal. Soon the secretary recognized him and stood up to greet him, but Will only looked away and sat down.

The dark haired woman behind the desk stood up and shook Barney’s hand. “Hi Barney.” She looked at both Bev and Will. “And you two must be Beverly Katz and Will Graham.” The woman smiled as Bev shook her hand while Will did otherwise.

“Not a fan of hand shakes, that’s alright.” Will rolled his eyes at the obvious niceties. “Anyways, I’m Doctor Alana Bloom and I’ll just get straight to the reason why I.” Emphasis on I, Will thought. “Called for this meeting.” A small pause manifested as she sat down.

“Well if any of you didn’t know already, the quote unquote *shoe licking* incident.” Will scrunched up his face ”..that occurred yesterday involved the 3 of you and it was pretty crystal clear who was who and which did which.” She reiterated. Bev’s body language stiffened as for Will, it remained lifeless.

“Will Graham. I know a lot of things are on your plate right now but I hope you understand that your scholarship doesn’t automatically give you a jail free card from whatever happens to you in this university.” The boy stared back at the doctor blankly, with no intent of taking in whatever was being said.

“And you Hannibal, I know you are a Lecter and frankly only a few years younger than me. But as the dean of this university, you still must be reprimanded. Further compensation would be expected from you and Mr. Graham until this case is done over with.” Will tipped his head sidewards as he noticed how robotic and monotonous she sounded as she spoke to Hannibal. He glanced back at Hannibal and saw his eyes, empty, and the corner of his lips arched, looking as if he knew everything Doctor Bloom was about to say.

“Considering the amount of mess our university is in at this time and the incident placing more fuel to the fire. Strict atonement would be expected from you two until further notice.”

Bev sat up. “But Doctor Bloom, you don’t understand.” She scoffed, causing Hannibal to look at her amusedly. “Will didn’t do anything. Frankly it was all Hannibal’s doing and Will only fought back for his own safety! He just saved me doctor-“

“I know Ms. Katz.” She briefly closed her eyes, interrupting the girl. “But as they were both main players in the incident, I expect compensation from the both of them so it’s fair game.”

“How is this fair to you? To-to any of us! But what about Verger? A-and Dolarhyde Doctor Bloom? Weren’t they also part?! And me too for fucks sake!”

“Katz.” Barney reprimanded, getting a sour look back from Beverly.

“Yes Ms. Katz. I already got them over with and I expect them too. For you Ms. Katz, you get a 2 week suspension from your classes.” The girl sat back as Doctor Bloom looked back at Hannibal and Will.

“So right now, I’ve made an agreement with Secretary Chilton that having both of you living in the same dormitory during your 2 month suspension period may be a fair reparation that requires no repercussions from the two of you.” Will and Bev sat up in shock while Hannibal remained sitting accordingly. On the other hand, a look of disappointment painted Barney’s face.

Will finally spoke up. “No- No you can’t do this to me Doctor Bloom. This- this is not fair game. I am not the perpetrator in this! How are we getting the same degree of punishment?!” Hannibal glanced over at him with a crescent smile forming on his face.

Chilton interrupted, “Oh Mr. Graham, I think you’re forgetting our agreement and the contract you signed the time I came over to your house.” He snidely got out his suitcase and the contract Will signed. “Barney was even there as a witness.” Chilton looked over at the man. He then read. “ *I, William Graham* , that’s you.” The secretary snidely remarked. “ *...am signing this agreement for Ravenstag’s scholarship program under the conditions that I must retain order and discipline during my stay in the vicinity. Furthermore, if in any case these conditions have not been followed, I must offer full compensation under the rules of the university’s authorities, with strict. compliance.* ” He flicked the contract close and handed it over to Will who doubtfully re-read it, clearly not remembering this part of the agreement.

“I hope you understand Mr. Graham that you yourself fully agreed to our conditions as soon as you signed that contract.” Bloom pointed. During this time, Will was in too much disbelief to even object for his own right.

Hannibal finally spoke up. “Though Mr. Graham and I are in a 2 month suspension, together, he is still free to go out and get his lectures, though through the form of an online setup in our dormitory, is that correct Doctor Bloom?” He winked while Will scoured back at the latter. “Yes that’s correct Hannibal.” The man looked back at the baffled boy, “Well that settles it Will, you still have your life so don’t worry.” Will grinded his teeth at the man’s smugness.

After a while they all finally stood up and greeted each other their goodbyes, except Will, who immediately got out of the hall but was caught up by Hannibal.

“Will.” He called out.

“Oh please what now? Would you at least give me the last moments of my life before it's all taken away from me you piece of shit.” Hannibal stared back at him with a waning ego.

“No, not your life-”

“My freedom then. You’d take that from me.”

Hannibal reached out his hand. “What about a truce?” Will laughed, incredulous by this act. “You really can’t take no for an answer can’t you you little bitch?” Will turned back in frustration.

“You publicly humiliate me and now with this entire goddamned arrangement, I have to live in this hellsent university and worst of all with *you* against my own will!” He continued to laugh as he strongly fought tears to fall from his eyes, still not maintaining straight eye contact with the latter. “A-And I know my cynicism may be too much at times but I know damn well you planned this just to get back at me even if you say you didn’t.” Hannibal’s brows raised, stupefied.

“Your body language with Doctor Bloom says it all Lecter.” Will paced around. “I-I don’t know what you did to get me in this position right now but your stupid pride just couldn’t take the embarrassment that’s eating you up.” The boy got closer to the taller man. “All because of that one punch in the face right?” His quivering voice echoed through the large halls.

“Not fond of eye contact aren’t you?” The space between them couldn’t get any more larger as it was right at that moment. Will's eyes finally stared back at him, spilling with hatred before walking away.

The ride back the dorm was quiet, to say the least. Barney sighing while occasional questions from Bev gets thrown at him while Will sits alone and quiet at the back seat. The winter made the skies get dark at this time, fueling the seasonal depression and desolation washing over Will, especially with the news that he's moving away from the only person who probably made him welcome his entire life and next to the person who wanted his head on a plate the most. As they arrived at the dorm, Will immediately went out the car first to pack his things up to avoid the heavy emotions that would be anchoring over him in the next few days.

“Are you seriously just gonna let them make Hannibal your roommate? Dude, it hasn’t even been a week since you’ve moved in!” Bev shut Will’s bedroom door as he laid on his unmade bed, not knowing what to do. “And I’d have to go back to my old dead-end scholarship funded dorm. Which I *absolutely* don’t wanna go back to. It barely straddles the bare minimum living conditions dude, it’s literally a boot camp. All the metal bunk beds and shit. *Shared bathrooms*.. Ugh. *Traumatic.*” Bev shuddered in thought. He sat up and looked at Bev with furrowed brows and half-lidded eyes as she handed him a cup of coffee. “Bev, do you think I’d want this either?” He pathetically sighed, taking the mug from her hand.

The girl sipped on her own coffee and blankly looked at her friend. “Tsk, then why didn’t you say something earlier you spineless shit!” She pinched the bridge of her nose while Will only looked at her tiredly. “I was doing all the talking out there man.”

“Yeah, well I’m *sorry* you’re no longer gonna be my trust fund baby.” Will sarcastically remarked, shaking his head at the girl. “And do you *really* think they’d take my word for account if I actually did? Besides, I'm not gonna go through that effort when I know it's worthless.” He paused. “I’m not like you Bev.” The girl placed her mug on the bedside table and eyed Will with slight faux-offense manifesting.

“So what are you saying William Graham?” Will’s face scrunched.

“Don’t call me William.” He shook his head in disapproval while a half moon shaped smile formed on Bev’s face. “Oh?” Bev sounded out as she took out the stuffed dog from Will’s

hands.

“Let’s ask Mr. Dog right here. Hey Mr. Dog, does Will really not like to be called William?” Will placed his mug down and tried to grab it back from Bev but was only pushed back by the girl.

“Give Winston back Bev!” Her eyebrows raised before giving out a guttural laugh which annoyed Will further.

“Give him back!” Will tackled Bev on his bed and successfully got the stuffed toy back but was now washed over by a wave of embarrassment as the girl did not stop laughing.

His eyebrows furrowed. “Why are you still laughing?” Bev sat up and wiped her eyes full of tears. “I’m sorry I’m sorry man. I just think that it’s kinda adorable that such a serious guy like you has a stuffed dog named Winston.” Will rolled his eyes. “But don’t take it as an insult dude. I just think it’s pretty cute.” Bev ruffled Will’s curls which further messed up his already disorderly hair.

“But seriously though, Will.” She straightened up. “Are you really gonna leave?” The boy looked at the stuffed dog in his hands and meekly nodded. Bev looked back in disappointment and briefly put her head on his shoulder. Will reciprocated the action before getting interrupted by knocks on the door. They both looked at each other and got up to get the door.

Upon opening, they saw Barney but was also greeted by the unfortunate sight of Hannibal by his side which caused a guttural sigh from Bev and for Will to walk away to his room. “Seriously Barney?” Bev pointed but was interrupted by Hannibal walking into their shared dorm. “H-Hey!” Bev shouted as Barney shook his head at the man.

“He wouldn’t get off my back until I led him to Will. Sorry Bev.” The girl slowly shut her eyes and massaged her temples.

“Look Lecter. I don’t know what you want but whatever it is, I don’t care. So get out.” She got closer to the towering man, but was ignored as the latter scanned the room as if it was his. He looked back straight at the annoyed girl and smiled. “I want Will.” He proceeded to go to where Will headed, making Bev swiftly head for the closed door first, protecting it like her life depended on it.

“I swear to God you piece of shit you’re not getting in.” She clutched the door frame with all her might.

“Ms. Katz I suggest moving away-“

“Y-You’re gonna hit me? Huh?” The girl threatened but was replied back with a smug smile from the latter. The taller man looked at Barney, who strongly grabbed Bev’s arm with a disappointed expression. “B-Barney..” Her voice quivered as the man shook his head. “I’m sorry.” Hannibal then opened the door to Will’s room and saw the boy packing his stuff up, with Winston still in his hand.

The man closed the door and scanned Will's room. "Hi Will." He greeted but was ignored by the latter. Will continued to pack his things up as if Hannibal was never there which slightly ticked the man off. Hannibal tried to ignore the silence by engaging in mundane small talk with the silent boy, hoping to get a word out of him. But he still wouldn't budge. He stealthily folded Will's bedsheet and clothes, in desperation, so he could get a single reaction from the latter.

But still, nothing was said.

Hannibal saw the stuffed dog that was in Will's hand just earlier laying on the floor "Here." He handed it to Will who got it from his hand, still not looking at him. Hannibal's patience couldn't get any shorter so in a quick impulse, he pushed the boy down the bed and pinned his hands up his head, which still held the stuffed toy.

"What do you want Lecter? Huh? I'll be living with you for the rest of my days in this goddamn university." Will forcefully stuffed his clothes in his duffel bag "Can't you just leave well enough alone? Or are you actually just stupid to comprehend boundaries?" He scoffed as he briskly walked around the room, taking his things and carelessly throwing them into his suitcase— still not looking at the older man.

"Look at me Will. Don't be rude." Hannibal tried to make his eyes focus on him but Will's glassy eyes desperately tried to look away. Still not saying anything, Will abruptly tried to let go out of Hannibal's iron grip but was unsurprisingly unsuccessful. "Look. At. Me." Will immediately noticed the crack at the man's rumbling voice and took advantage of it.

Will chuckled slightly as he closed his eyes, making Hannibal loosen his grip on his aching wrists. The taller man's lips slightly parted by the sight and was completely caught off guard when Will got out his grip and held a sharp switchblade to the latter's throat. It shined brighter as he placed more pressure on the man's skin.

Hannibal snarled at the younger boy with ease and amusement as Will finally looked at the man straight in the eyes and whispered close to his ear. "You're the worst person I have ever met."

Will proceeded to throw vicious punches at Hannibal's face as he straddled him. But with each punch, Hannibal's smile grew wider and wider as Will's knuckles glowed a darker red with each hit until Barney finally opened the door and dragged Will away from the blood stained man. Hannibal groaned deeply as Will's switchblade accidentally got caught on his collarbone, scraping it and causing it to bleed.

Will kicked and punched carelessly to get out of Barney's grip. "Let me go! Let me go!" Hannibal stared back victoriously as he brushed his hair back from his wounded face.

"Will! Stop it!" Barney shouted, immediately causing a frantic Bev to run in the room. Meanwhile, Hannibal snarled at the feral boy in content and brushed a stray curl away from his face before straightening his own coat.

"I'll see you later, Will." The man shoved his way out of the mess of the room he made and eventually out of the dormitory. After the door slam echoed through the halls Will

immediately dropped down in frustration, visibly shaken. Warm teardrops fell down on the carpeted floors as Bev kneeled down beside him while Barney only looked the other way.

Chapter End Notes

Damn, the fcking cyberattack ao3 was in got me cackling ong. Anyways I offer a new chapter with sum Hannigram a n g s t that would be more to come in the next chapters (finally)

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The feeling of dread settled in Will's stomach as they finally pulled up to the place he would be atoning in for the next and longest 2 months of his life. Though the place was still in the vicinity of the university, it felt like a completely different part of town. Cold winter air, Victorian-esque lamp posts with warm— almost burnt out bulbs as frost bitten leaves rusted through the sycamore and pine trees as one would come across in a horror movie, or a Charles Dickens novel. It definitely was no ordinary dormitory house, it was almost built like a mansion. But it was not big enough to be called one. It was secluded, but it looked safe enough to live in. But still, Will couldn't feel less safe than he was at that moment.

"Is this it?" He asked, hoping to hear a "no" for an answer.

"This is it." Barney sighed. Will's eyelids dropped in exhaustion. "It's one of Lecter's spare houses in the university. Built especially for him." *You don't say.* Will thought. They stepped out of the lone vehicle and out into the darkness and cold, where only a few street lights lit the street up. As soon as they got through the entrance doors, they were immediately greeted by a variety of maids and butlers, faces painted with exhausted smiles while a few other older students passed by on the 2nd and 3rd floors.

"Oh, so another dorm house. Thought Lecter owned it?" Will asked, looking around the house "living room" or if it could even be called one.

"Yes he does. But considering the kid almost never stays here, it's been converted into another dorm house." Will sighed in relief. "Except only a few college students stay here. Those being ones who could pay for the stay, and Lecter's friends." The boy deeply breathed in and bit his tongue hard enough that it could bleed.

Will cautiously asked the older man. "Does.. Verger and Dolarhyde stay here?" Barney replied with a deep sigh.

"Verger, only occasionally. But Francis does, full time. Though I'm not sure if they are now considering they're on suspension too." *Thank fuck.* The boy silently celebrated in false hope. Barney led the way upstairs, Will followed too eventually, trying hard to ignore the overly-unsettling smiles put out by the different maids and butlers. After a while of walking countless stairs to the 3rd floor, they stopped at the room stationed at the very end and almost empty part of the house. Barney gently knocked on the door and after a few seconds, a woman with pitch black hair came to greet them with sharp eyes.

"Chiyoh." Greeted Barney as she said nothing, stepping aside from the entrance. The older man went first as Will glared at the woman's direction, hesitant to go in.

"Will." The man called out before Will finally stepped foot inside. The room was dark, and smelled like old books and dust. Barely any traces of modernity lined its rooms except for the

automatic pin lights that were scattered throughout the halls. Will looked around the room and out the balcony to see only the towering trees surrounding the house and baubles of lights flashing from the other dormitories and buildings stationed at the other side of the campus.

“Are you all settled?” Barney asked the dazed boy, a half hearted nod was put out.

“Your room’s just to the left of the balcony Will.” He only nodded again and said his goodbyes to the latter before Chiyoh led him out the door.

It was now only the two of them in the penthouse-like place and the air of emptiness that immediately manifested suffocated Will.

“Who are you?” He bluntly asked.

“I’m Chiyoh. Young Master’s assistant.” Will pursed his lips in a bout of confusion.

“Young Master?”

“Hannibal.” *Ah* . Will thought. Another bout of silence filled the room. He didn’t want to ask where he was, so that was the last thing that was exchanged between them before he finally left for his room. Not long after, he heard the front door open and shut which brought back a little bit of relief in him. He looked at the wall clock and realized that it was almost midnight, but was not surprised at all. Chronic insomnia got the best of him all night while he sat on his bed and rested his head on the windowsill of his room. Admittedly, a wave of relief and relaxation filled his system as the cold winter air combed through his hair, making him almost doze off completely.

A few hours later, Hannibal finally arrived at the dorm house, instantly noticing Will, peacefully sleeping by the open window as he got out of his parked Mercedes. He paused for a few seconds to look at the boy before slamming the car door shut and finally going in, ignoring the frantic maids and butlers greeting and reaching for his bags. He arrived at their shared dorm, slamming the front door without care which woke Will up. Will closed his eyes and anticipated the worst but fortunately, Hannibal didn’t have a bone to pick with him that night, shocking even the boy himself. Will silently laughed in deep relief before cheerfully lying down on his bed.

“ *Psst* cherry pie!” His body retracted back up as he saw Matthew standing outside the building, holding a paper bag and coffee cup in his hand.

Will hurriedly looked around and whisper-shouted. “Do you have a death wish?” He glanced around once more. “He might see you!” Matthew looked calmer than ever.

“Nahh he won’t.” He smirked. Will combed his wild curls back, still not believing what was happening. The boy reconsidered but not for long.

Fuck this. He swiftly got his jacket hanging on the door and ducked out through the window.

Before Matthew even knew it, Will was out and carefully climbing down the hooded roofs of the other rooms and down the pipes stealthily, trying not to wake anyone up. Matthew's eyes

widened at the with genuine amazement. *Will Graham you son of a bitch.* He laughed as the boy finally got down on the ground. Blood rushed through Matthew's head at the sight of Will running to him with a rare smile plastered on his face.

“Let’s go for a walk.” A breathless Will nodded, smiling with his baby blue eyes glinting in the dark. Matthew messed up his unruly curls, smile fading as he looked up at Hannibal, glaring with sharp daggers for eyes before turning away. Will stared at the latter with growing confusion. “W-What’s the matter?” He looked back and saw nothing, only the curtains to his room window blowing outside just like how he left it.

Will stared back at the latter, still confused and looked behind him once more. “You alright? Looks like you just saw a ghost.” He looked behind him again.

“N-No it’s nothing. I thought I saw a large bat or something like that. “ Will rolled his eyes, scoffing at the man. Matthew stared back at the boy with reverence gleaming from his eyes. He proceeded to softly shove the coffee cup and paper bag on Will’s chest then walked away. Will stalled and looked at Matthew with awe and carefully took a sip of his hot coffee before catching up to the fast walking man.

Hannibal took one last drag of his cigarette and flicked the half-finished stick out his balcony, daring the stray leaves to burn and create a small fire. He finally exhaled the remaining smoke in his system and shut the door with full force, causing the glass window to crack and nearby birds to loudly flap their wings and fly away.

Will took another sip of his coffee. “How did you find me?” Matthew chuckled as he looked back at boy, who was now eating a piece of cherry pie.

Matthew grabbed stray stones and skipped them at the gleaming lake beside them. “Everyone was talking about it like hell back in the dorm. You’re a celebrity now, Will Graham.” Will nervously fidgeted with his fingers.

“A celebrity huh?” Will laughed. “If anything, I feel like I’m gonna get shouted at *‘crucify him! crucify him!’* anytime soon rather than get in a bunch of nonsense late night interviews.” Matthew chuckled half-heartedly

Matthew stopped and looked down at the remaining stones in his hand. “You’re miserable aren’t you?” Matthew straightforwardly asked. Will looked away with quivering eyes in response.

“Why’d you come to me anyway?” Will aggressively scratched his fingers this time, trying to change the subject. An air of awkwardness finally settled in between the both of them as nothing was exchanged between them.

“It’s because of Hannibal isn’t i-”

Will stopped and gave out a hollowed laugh. “How hard is it for anyone.. to not mention that name to me? Just for once..” Matthew bit his bottom lip and tucked his hands in his jacket pockets as he walked towards where Will stood. Will looked back up at him weirdly as the taller man grabbed his left hand, authoritatively.

“Don’t touch me.” Will sharply pulled his hand from the latter’s grip. Matthew sighed as he got his hand out again and showed it to him eye-level. But before he could say anything, his jaw slightly gaped at the sight of his blood stained fingers.

“You’re bleeding. You picked at your fingers too much.” Matthew got out a cloth bandage from his bag and wrapped it around his pinky and ring finger. “Just thank residency for that, or else you’d be going back with bloody fingers. Not really the best thing for someone to see in the middle of the night is it.” He teased the younger boy, who was clearly not having any of it at the moment. Matthew’s head tipped as he noticed the severe amount of blisters and calluses on Will’s hand. “You have worker hands.” Matthew stated, still wrapping the bandage around Will’s fingers.

“Is that an insult?”

“Quite the opposite.” Matthew chuckled. “Means you’re a hard worker is all.”

“I deliver for my dad’s fish business.” Will replied in a deadpanned tone. “...which is the reason why I’m here right now.”

The latter paused for a second. “How so?”

“Long story short, all I was supposed to do was deliver some stock to the canteen for inspection but by all chances I ended up getting in the middle of a school fight club then the rest is history.” He exhaustingly recalled. “I was never supposed to be here if it weren’t for my nosiness.”

“I don’t think nosiness is the right term.” Matthew gently placed his bandaged hand down and looked back up at him. “You just wanted to save the girl. Right?” He grabbed another handful of stray stones surrounding Will and went back to skipping stones at the river.

Will glanced at Matthew. “Do you know her?” He genuinely asked, desperately looking for an answer.

“Well, I mean I'm pretty sure almost everyone here knows about that video but yeah I do actually. Abigail Hobbs, that’s her name. She was rushed to the ER immediately right after the fight but went slightly off the hooks a few days after she woke up from a coma so was sent to the psych ward. I was nurse-in-charge the day she checked in so I took care of her before she was discharged a week later.”

“H-How is she?” Will’s voice quivered impatiently waiting for an answer.

“The girl’s a fighter, that’s all I could say. Placed in a coma for 2 days, went slightly mad, sent to the psych ward then got discharged a week later. What more could I say?” Matthew turned around to Will. “But she kept involuntarily saying your last name when she had night terrors but didn’t have a single memory of it *or* your name when she woke up.” The boy sighed with a pang of confusing disappointment.

“Where is she now?”

“No one really knows if I’m gonna be honest. But all we know is that she’s now in the FBI’s custody considering they finally found a wanted serial killer in their hands Garrett Jacob Hobbs, her dad.” Matthew paced around and sat on the spiky grass, looking out to the crystal river. “No family. No friends. No life.” Will's jaw clenched at the amount of disappointment that was consuming him whole. *A serial killer for a father? and now facing the consequences of his actions.* The fact that the girl was saved, but still was ultimately given a much more miserable life sentence than dying was enough for Will to spite himself more than he already did, despite being the one that saved her and the immensely toxic relatability that was experienced by both parties.

Will dragged his hands through his mouth. “Can I ask you a question, Matthew?” Will sat beside Matthew on the grass.

“Shoot.”

“Why do you think Hannibal is so hellbent in making my life so miserable?” A smirk painted Matthew’s face, confusing Will.

“I thought you didn’t wanna talk about *‘he-who-shall-not-be-named’* ” Will punched the latter in the arm, making Matthew laugh harder.

“Serious question.” Will rested his chin on his shivering legs.

“I don’t know either man. But what I do know is that the man *always* gets what he wants and if he doesn’t, he’ll go through hell and back just to finally get even a *taste* of it. But he’d never just stop at taste, he’d want to savor it all eventually.” A feeling of uneasiness slowly crawled through his spine, making him shudder just by the thought of it. “In my own experience, Hannibal never does this shit to anyone he just likes to regularly fuck with. But you, Will Graham,” Matthew pointed a finger to Will’s chest, backing the latter onto the grass. “..really grinded his gears and it’s honestly impressive.” Before Will could fully process whatever he said, Matthew proceeded to stand up and take a hand out for the latter. Will eyed it with confusion.

“W-What are you doing?” Matthew only laughed at the boy, who was now standing up, dusting off the dirt on his jeans.

“It’s 2:30 in the morning and I’m bringing you back before any of us gets dropped by Mr. Lecter.” Matthew teased the boy as he walked wobbly by his side, occasionally bumping each other as sleepiness got the best of Will. Soon enough, Will’s head was constantly drooping to Matthew’s side and eventually his arm, wrapped around Matthew’s body to regain his lack of balance.

“Cherry pie, wake up.” Will jerked his head up, almost brushing Matthew’s lips accidentally. The latter’s ears glowed a dark red, causing a shift in his voice. With this, Matthew nudged Will’s nape with slight hard force which abruptly woke the sleeping boy up. “Sorry Will, you won't wake up.” Matthew looked away, still feeling heat circulate around his face.

“Nah nah ss alright Mattchu.” He sleepily replied back with individual curls covering his face. Matthew binded at the sight of the angelic looking boy as much as he could before,

fighting the urge to warm the boy's lips with his. He steadily got closer to the boy before seeing Will's eyes slowly fluttering open, thus ultimately deciding to bring him inside the house. All the maids looked at them concernedly. Matthew smiled back at them awkwardly.

"Will, do you have a key?" He settled the boy down on the lobby couch. "H-Hm? Hm?" He groggily sounded as he started to snore gently.

Suddenly, Matthew's call pager started to buzz aggressively, slightly tearing him mentally as Will still wouldn't bother to wake up. "Shit.." The man mumbled to himself before bringing out a pencil and a paper from his bag. Matthew quickly wrote something out and tucked it into Will's jean pockets before whispering something to the maids and leaving. As Matthew left, all the maids flocked to where Will was and concernedly stared at the boy without actually doing anything. Some of them tried to but some whispered at each other as they stared at the sleeping boy in awe like he was some kind of strange artifact.

"Move." A low voice echoed the empty lobby, resulting in the maids to flock away like birds.

Chapter End Notes

sorry ya'll for the late update! I've been trying to get out my writing slump lately so yeah. Here's a 2 in 1 chapter since I've wanted the chapters to be quite longer and I've also noticed how short they were LMAO.

Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will opened his eyes and found everything he saw to blur and mash with each other, as if he was blind. Tapping on his face for his glasses he suddenly jerked up as he found himself comfortably on his bed and fully changed in his pajamas as the sunlight entered the beige grandma-looking curtains. He clutched his button down pajama blouse in disbelief, still remembering that he was with Matthew just hours ago. *Who the fuck got me into these?* He panicked. After minutes of worried pondering, he found himself to be sick of the current environment he was in; birds chirping, leaves ruffling, and creaks from the next door neighbor's balcony door prominently passed through Will's ears, which made him miss Bev's screeching voice waking him up even if he didn't want to.

Yeah, it was tranquil, but something about the silence unsettled Will himself. So he decided to finally stand up and quietly go out from his room to check if Hannibal was still there. Though Will hesitated to do so, the familiar smell of coffee and cherry pie seeping in the door cracks urged him to do otherwise. And he did. *Goddamnit.* He mumbled under his breath as he pocketed his pepper spray and slowly tiptoed on the carpeted hallway floors.

"Shit!" Will jumped from a door loudly shutting close behind him.

"Good Morning Will." A fully dressed Hannibal passed by him. The boy instantly retracted back to his room but was caught by a strong arm pulling him towards the dining table. Before Will could even react, Hannibal forcefully pushed him down on an empty seat and pulled a small plate containing a slice of what seemed like freshly baked cherry pie in front of him.

"Eat." Hannibal pointed at the plate and turned away.

Will eyed Hannibal up and down with suspicion as he poured him a cup of coffee. "What's your angle?"

"Can't one do something nice for his new roommate?" Hannibal sat opposite of him

"C'mon don't be so cynical Will."

The boy refused to touch the piece of pie, sitting uncomfortably in thick skepticism but his stomach said otherwise. Hannibal looked away, smiling as he sipped his own cup of coffee. Will took a careful first bite at the pie, even smelling it for any poisonous substance that Hannibal may have mixed in it. His eyes widened like full moons at the rich taste of the pie and took aggressive following bites like it was the first time he's eaten again in years.

"Slow down Will. Treat the food with respect, if you can." Hannibal patronizingly advised, whipping out a newspaper. "What are you, my dad? Unbelievable." Will's nose flared and eyes rolled as hard as it could before taking a sip of his coffee.

Hannibal flipped his newspaper forcibly. “It’s improper.”

“I have mace on me y’know.” Will stared back at the latter deadpanned, mouth still half full of pie. Hannibal visibly cringed as he noticed the food droplets scattering on Will’s side of the table as he spoke. The man closed his eyes and tried to keep patient with the boy.

“Feel free to use it whenever, Will.” He hid his face behind the thin newspaper. Will noticed this change of behavior and grinned at the thought of riling Hannibal up to the point of him leaving. He then proceeded to obnoxiously sip his coffee and swallowed it as audibly as he could.

On the other side of the table, Hannibal’s fingers slowly clenched on the newspaper trying to remain of his rare kindness. “Will.” Hannibal glanced at the boy. Will looked back at him, sipping his coffee louder this time. The man only smiled back as he brought out Will’s pager. The latter stopped and abruptly stood up from his side of the table.

“How did you get that?” The utensils made a ringing sound as the table shook. Will tried to stay calm in it all but couldn’t while the man fiddled with the gadget, pressing the buttons on it carelessly.

“Stop doing that.”

“Doing, what?” Hannibal continued to press the different buttons until it turned on with a staticy audio of Agent Starling’s voice greeting him.

“Hi Will, it’s Agent Starling. How’s it goin’ there? Any updates on Lecter?” The agent’s southern accent echoed the room, making Will’s heart race. Will felt like his breath and heart beat could be heard from Hannibal’s side of the table. He was so sure Agent Starling knew what was happening from the long bout of silence that was returned from Will’s end.

A toothy grin plastered the man’s face. *“Will? Hello?”* She called out before getting cut off by Hannibal releasing the call button. For a few seconds, the only contact that remained was from their piercing eyes before Will abruptly jolted to his room as fast as he could with Hannibal only behind his back by milliseconds until the door to Will’s room blocked him. Loud banging commenced around the halls but it didn’t stop Will from packing his things in his backpack and deciding to go out the window.

But the thing is, it couldn’t budge.

“What the fuck! No no no no this can’t be..” Will’s heart dropped, realizing it was hammered neatly shut. He could hear the door’s lock system further shatter as more time was wasted.

“Will, there’s nowhere else to go.” Hannibal growled, continuing to push the door open with full force. Will pranced around the room and dug into his bag as he remembered the phone Agent Starling gave him just a few days back. He immediately got it out and texted the Agent.

Agent Strling. Its Will Grhum. He found the pager.. SOS ASaP.

He sent the message riddled in wrong grammar and spelling in an adrenaline high before hiding the phone under a loose floorboard just in time. The door finally flew open with a bang, sending Will to look for an opening while Hannibal approached him.

“Tell me Will, who was that on the pager?” Hannibal grabbed him by his shirt collar. “I’ll give you one chance.” Will slowly brought out his switchblade from his pocket.

“Why do you care?” He spat back before slicing Hannibal on the wrists then running out in an instant. As much as this bought him time, Hannibal proved to be much faster than the boy when he grabbed a kitchen knife and pointed it to his back right before Will could turn the knob to the front door. Will felt the blade slowly dig into his skin as his hair stayed in Hannibal’s grip.

Will surrendered and placed his hands up, dropping his black switchblade on the ground and his backpack. “Let go of my hair dick.” The man let go, still maintaining the blade with enough force to prick the latter's back.

“Turn around.” Hannibal sternly advised, distancing the knife away from the boy a bit. Will did as he was told, hands still raised in the air. He pressed the sharp knife even deeper this time right at Will’s sternum, causing a sharp gasp to be let out from him.

Hannibal snarled. “Kneel.” Will’s eye twitched at the command, refusing to do so before feeling the tip of the blade begin to sink in further in him. Will’s head was tipped up by Hannibal’s free hand, who gently but firmly gripped it, preventing him from looking away. “Take out everything that’s in your bag right now.” Will couldn’t feel more humiliated than he was in his life. But still, he regretfully grabbed his backpack, shaking out the only few contents inside it, those being a pencil case, a notebook, earphones, his personal phone, mace, and Matthew’s jacket. “See? You could be a good boy after all isn’t that right Will?” Will bit the inside of his cheek as he felt the man’s fingers trace the tip of his chin down to the bottom of his face, just right above his bobbing Adam's apple. Hannibal then let go of the boy’s face with slight force then took the stray jacket and scanned it while Will looked away.

“Matthew’s isn’t it?” Will didn’t say anything. The man took it from him and left him kneeling as he proceeded to walk into his room. The latter followed, hoping that Hannibal wouldn’t find the phone under the floorboard. When he went in, he found Hannibal carefully placing out his clothes on his bed as he scanned over his things which placed an uncanny feeling on Will.

Hannibal finally stood up and glanced over at Will. “You’re not gonna go anywhere Will. Do you understand?” He got closer to the boy, now in an approximation where they could feel each other’s breath. Will nodded, just thankful he didn’t look under the floorboards.

“Come outside.” Hannibal walked out, grabbing a roll of gauze from the bathroom across the hall.

“Did you carry me up last night?” Will looked at the man, who was now not reciprocating the action at him. The latter continued to walk away to the living room with Will following behind. They sat down across each other while the distance between them continued to fill with silence.

Will started. “What do you want from me?” Sharpened eyes piercing across the room.

The latter deeply breathed in the strong, musky, cheap scent of the boy. “Who was that speaking on the pager?” He tightened the bandages. “Don’t lie to me Will. I’ll know.”

Will carefully spoke. “Local police wanted to keep in touch with me.” He lied.

“Hm.” Hannibal sounded out. “Why would they want to keep in touch with *you* and what do they want with me?”

The younger boy scoffed. “Don’t you think being involved in two consecutive fight clubs in *your* university would be enough for the police to want to know what’s actually going on in this place? Or are you really just way off your head Lecter?” Will taunted as he unknowingly ravished at the sight of Hannibal’s blood seeping through the bandages. Hannibal bit his bottom lip and nodded as he stood up. He got the pager out again and before Will could even blink, a loud thud rang throughout the room. Will’s eyes twitched as he opened his hand and showed the disassembled gadget.

“Now they will never know..” The furnace fire roared as he threw the pieces in and eventually Matthew’s jacket which caused black smoke to migrate to every corner of the room. Hannibal opened the balcony door and looked at the hanging stag head stationed in the middle of the room, then back at Will. “Why don’t you ever call me by my name, Will?” The latter stood up and leaned on the furnace, his back facing Hannibal.

“Frankly, I don’t feel like you have much humanity or a decent identity in you, to be called one.” Cold winter breeze blew Will’s curls. The air between them grew thicker, eventually feeling like an empty void.

“And if ever you do have an *identity* by god’s grace or whatever and you’re not just mere hell spawn on earth, I find whatever you’re doing ugly.” Will scoffed, and faced Hannibal with growing assertion. “Lecter, you are the embodiment of everything vile, and ugly about your family.” He traced the lining of the leather armchair Hannibal was still sitting on.

“Lastly, I don’t find you interesting at all. So why bother?”

The man abruptly stood up and faced Will, who instinctively backed away from him. He walked closer to the former, who was now slowly walking backwards before cornering him into the kitchen counter. “You will.” Hannibal left the apartment, still cornered to the kitchen counter like he never left.

Chapter End Notes

HEADS UP! Two chapter updates in a row!

Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"What do you mean he found it?!" Will abruptly distanced the phone from his ear as shouts spouted from the other end of his phone.

"I told you, Agent Starling's got it all covered. Besides that pager didn't mean shit, it's the phone I'm worried about and let's just be grateful right now that the fucker didn't find it."

"Will. He *destroyed* the pager. The one from that those FBI agents gave you- I- I don't need to explain to you man, since *you* got it but a-apparently I don't think you understand the cost of what he's done Will! What has that man done to you- Has he drugged you or something? Blackmailed?-"

"Bev, relax." He sighed. " I said Agent Starling's got it and-" He stopped himself as he felt the floorboard he was currently standing on gently vibrating. *What the..* Will crouched down and put his ear closer before immediately realizing an incoming call was getting through.

"Shit." He cursed to himself, desperately feeling the sides of the wooden floorboard for an opening before finally pulling the almost sealed floorboard out, falling hard on his back as got the buzzing phone out.

"Will? What the hell's going on there?" Bev shouted out from the phone. Will shook his head and recognized Agent Starling's number flashing on the screen.

"I-I sorry man I'll call you later." He dropped the call before the girl could object, almost tripping on the way up from various stray clothes and books on the floor as he looked for his earphones. *Where the fuck?!* He frantically looked around before finally finding it lying on his desk with the different trash that was laying around it which he then placed on his unmade bed. Before answering the call, he looked around and ripped the thick window curtains off its hooks before fastening it to the door– just for safekeeping. Not long after he got his earphones and carelessly pressed the answer call.

"Hi Will." A choppy audio of Agent Starling greeted Will as he put his earphones in.

"Hi Agent Starling. I think you know-"

"Yes Will, and Crawford's not too happy about it." *Figured.*

"Yeah I guessed so."

"But, good news is we cut the line directing it to the FBI so-"

"And about that." Will shifted his position on the bed nervously. "Well, Lecter found it and after he found it, uhm, then proceeded to smash it into a million pieces before burning the

pieces in the furnace fire. I don't think I should say any more should I?" He shut his eyes and braced himself for the expected scolding he expected he was gonna get.

"Yeah we know." Will's eyes opened in surprise from the nonchalance in Starling's voice.

"H-How?"

"The moment our server got cut off from the pager, we immediately knew that it got destroyed. Even if it was lost we could still know where it was since all the hardware in it was programmed by the bureau's tech team. So our contact with it cannot possibly be cut off in whatever circumstance, except of course, if it got destroyed." Agent Starling gave out a sigh. "So that's why Crawford was so riled up about it." Will bit the inside of his lip until he tasted copper tainting the tip of his tongue.

"I-I'm sorry Agent Starling. I can make up for the gadget damage and whatever. Y-You can just cut off my insurances off the-"

"Oh." Starling interrupted. "Oh no Will, Crawford doesn't care about the gadget. He's riled up about the operation, almost getting cut short because of that little stunt by Lecter." He sat up in surprise with the realization that she didn't place the blame on him for the damages. *Well that was a first.*

"Thank god. Also, don't worry Agent Starling. I didn't tell him anything about you guys." He paused and continued in a lower tone this time "I just told you that you were some local police officers. I didn't give anything out about the bureau. I promise-"

"We know, we know. It's alright. But I'm afraid though that Crawford wants you to meet up with us again once the week's over. Just prepare yourself to be sermoned." Will sighed in acceptance, receiving a chuckle from Agent Starling. "Ha, I know that tone kid. But don't worry, I *know exactly* what it feels like." She joked, making Will feel a genuine relief from her comforting southern voice. He sat back and closed his eyes. "I'll just text you the details when Crawford's got it. You just give me a contact if there's any trouble 'round there, alright kid?" She added in a thick accent.

"Yes Agent Starling. Thank you again." He dropped the call. Looking outside, he saw an increasing number of students coming and going and of course, the eventual bugging news reporters and photographers scattered all around the vicinity of the dorm house, painfully trying hard to not be obvious. Right now, he was just glad Hannibal left him be, so he had the entire room to himself. As much as he was a nightmare to be with, one thing's for sure is that the man can cook. Will went out of his room and the highly recognizable smell of fresh assorted donuts immediately hit his nose, good ones in fact, and a hot pot of coffee too on the side. He walked towards the kitchen and lo and behold, a plate of neatly stacked donuts on a glass cake stand stood on the kitchen counter, warmly tempting the boy for a taste.

Will looked around and knocked on every room behind him to see if Hannibal was still there and as expected, he wasn't. Though an astoundingly sugary and unhealthy dessert/breakfast wasn't usually ideal for lunch, Will didn't quite have a choice after hours of locking himself in his own room, just so he wouldn't see Hannibal. He continued to stare the plate down in

awe and closed his eyes in resistance before he gave in and finally got one in forced nonchalance and poured himself a cup of coffee too.

Whatever. It's not like I'm giving in to him. It's just a donut. He desperately reasoned out as he took a swift bite of the donut. As expected but not anticipated, it was good. Really good as a matter of fact. Will scoffed in disbelief as he downed it down with hot coffee and walked to the balcony, not wanting to get any more. *Jesus Christ.* He tried to shake the balcony doors open but it couldn't budge too. It was locked.

"That son of a bitch. Is this shit getting him off or something?" Will cursed to himself, giving the doors a thrashing push. The boy still wouldn't believe that Hannibal would be this inept enough to lock him in for god knows why. He looked back at the entrance and hoped for one last chance of salvation.

"Please please *please* -" Locked. He aggressively shook the door in false hope for luck but kicked the door in eventual surrender. Giving in, he sat on the carpeted floors, realizing he was jailed inside his own apartment. After a while of contemplating what to do next, he decided there was one last chance left of escaping. Hannibal's room. There's no way he could seal his *own* windows in, right?

Will felt chills run all over his body each step he got closer to Hannibal's room. It felt like the pits of hell were welcoming him with sharp arms and a jagged smile as the sight of the door got closer to his peripheral. It absolutely didn't help that his room was stationed right at the very end of the hallway, where there were no windows and the hallway lights increasingly got dimmer the closer you got there. Will finally got in front of the door after what felt like about an hour of walking and pacing around the hallways. He hesitantly knocked first to possibly give him time to stall and walk away. But to his lost luck, no one answered.

"Hannibal!" He asked out, knocking on the door less carefully this time. No answer. Finally, he turned the door knob and to his shock, Hannibal's room looked like a completely new apartment, stationed in their apartment. It was two storeyed as well, which reminded Will of his old shared apartment with Bev. Sunlight peeked through the silk curtains of the ceiling height panel windows and in the middle sat a wooden desk with two brown leather armchairs sitting opposite to each other.

"Holy shit!" Will gawked and looked around the gigantic room, shutting the door as quietly as possible. The chance that Hannibal could've been at the same place at that moment was exceedingly high, considering this was basically a whole different apartment. Will prayed, took a large breath, and crossed his fingers before finally exploring the room for a hopeful opening he can get out of. The room, unsurprisingly, smelt like burnt cigarettes and book dust, which was apparent by the mini library on the second floor. He proceeded to walk around the wide room and as he went by the corners to find some hiding windows behind the curtains, something caught the side of his eye on Hannibal's desk. He moved the stray pencils away and to his surprise, it was an astoundingly detailed drawing of the wounded man, one that was a recreation of it with another man as a reference, a man who had the uncanny resemblance of Matthew.

"Oh my god." He dropped the paper down in realization and revealed all the other papers behind it which were cookbook recipes, jotted down in impressive hand-written cursive. His

eyes twitched in denial as he saw the other anatomical drawings hidden under what seemed like recipes. Will's nose flared as he recognized the other drawings too.

One of which was of Cassie Boyle, punctured on a moose head. The details were astoundingly accurate, too uncannily in fact. He remembered the exact reference this picture alluded to from the news. Will remembered it crystal clear, it was on the night his father got a call from the university. The night his entire life would change. *Shit.* He cursed as he heard the front door open and close. Footsteps gained momentum and increasingly got louder and louder before Will even knew it. So in a sudden adrenaline rush, he tried his best to rearrange the papers as he found them. Thankfully for his photographic memory, he was able to successfully in a short amount of time, though almost tripping his tracks from his shaking hands.

Now the only problem was finding a place to hide. He can't possibly sneak out the front door, no. That would be, quite literally, diving into his own grave. The balcony was off limits as well, he'd freeze or fall to death. Will knew exactly how vastly different the architecture and engineering of Hannibal's room was from his. He continued to frantically look around as time got shorter then finally settled on the second floor, where he saw a wide opening from right between the bookshelves. He heard conversations go on outside the hallway which stalled them and gave him more time to hide. The ladder slightly creaked as he climbed up, but not loud enough to be heard from the outside.

In the limited time Will had to save himself, he finally reached the top just right in time the door began to open, almost falling on his shoulder with a thud. Loud, drunken conversations mindlessly went on, giving him enough time to crawl away from Hannibal's peripheral, as so he thought. Fortunately, his back was turned and faced towards another person, who to Will's shock, but unsurprised, was Doctor Bloom. Will recognized her immediately from her curled, 50's-ish, brunette hair, and her comforting yet patronizing vocal modulations. He looked back in darkness and brought out his phone flashlight, covering the light with his pointer finger to reduce the amount of glare. Half the room was lit by an orangey-yellow light and revealed a bedroom, which was obviously Hannibal's from the king sized bed that was placed right in the middle. With no choice left to go, hearing footsteps get louder, climbing up the ladder, he turned off his flashlight and resorted to hiding under the wide bed in desperation.

"Wow, I didn't know you played the theremin Hannibal." Bloom said as the lights turned on, pointing at the stationed instrument. Will crouched down and covered his mouth. He felt like he was gonna faint from the awful mix of breathlessness and adrenaline rushing through his system. "Not really one of my strong suits I'd share at a dinner party Alana, but I'd love to teach you how." Hannibal's shoes got closer to the bottom of the bed.

"Hm, maybe some other time." Will discreetly scooted over to the back of the bed, feeling the edge of the bed sink. Alana walked to the other side of the room and paused. "Y'know I think about Will a lot." *What the..* The boy fumbled his phone out and began to audio record the conversation. Jagged breaths started to burn in him as the edge of the bed shifted again.

"How do you mean?"

“Sometimes I feel bad for the boy y’know Hannibal. I mean caught in a crossfire then quite literally being forced in here beyond his own willingness to do so. I- sometimes as a Dean I question myself-“

“Don’t.”

“I’d love to hear what you think Hannibal.”

“Well, I think, though it may seem like it may be a hard time for Will. He’s a clever boy. He won’t go down without a fight. I think that’s all the more reason I think he’s worth the scholarship, and our reputation.” Hannibal tapped the empty spot beside him, right above where Will was crouched on. “I like Will, you know that Alana.”

“Yes but I personally believe you’re relentless, a-and I don’t know if he’s good for you considering your destructive nature-“

“I know I’m destructive Alana. But don’t you think you’re underestimating the kid a little bit?” Will’s eyes fluttered as his breathing balanced out, uncovering his mouth. “Will’s stronger than you think he is, and finally, I now have a purpose in this school.”

Alana shifted from where she was standing and got closer to the man. “And that is?”

“Will is as destructive as I am. As a matter of fact, much more destructive to himself than I am to others. I wanna make him learn to appreciate it. He finds it ugly, when I find it beautiful. He needs to learn how much more control he could have with himself if he learns to embrace this, so-called *ugly* part of him.”

“Don’t you think implementing unorthodox methods in your practice is unethical Hannibal?” Alana rebutted. “After all you *are* still currently a student under me-“

“I know that. But I’m also currently bestriding the FBI like a colostomy.” Will grinded his teeth in itching panic while keeping a steady hand over his mouth. Alana shifted her position on the bed, facing Hannibal this time.

“Y-You mean.”

“Yes. Special Agent Crawford, the head of the behavioral science unit came into contact with me a week ago. He said he wanted me to work for them on the Minnesota shrike.” Hannibal paused. “And the current Chesapeake Ripper case.”

“Hannibal, how come you never told me this?”

Hannibal ignored the question. “Though I found this quite reckless and suspicious in their part, considering my *painfully* obvious affiliation with the university. An old colleague of mine from my psych-residency years recommended my exceptional background to the bureau, though unorthodox, as per sé.” He added. “But they said that’s what they wanted. So I gave it to them.” Will looked down at his phone and pinched himself as he saw he had less than 10% of his battery life remaining. He needed to make the best out of this moment. Hannibal needed to say more.

“Needless to say, I think this would be a great opportunity to clear our names and, maybe, possibly flip their own game on themselves.”

“So you- you think they’re spying on us?”

“Yes. More than likely. I just haven’t figured out how, or who it is.” The bed shifted again in a swift motion, hitching Will’s breath. “But, I’m starting to get the idea on who.” Hannibal’s shoe now edged backwards towards Will, causing him to scoot further back in utmost effort. Blood ran through the boy’s ears and painted a static, heated vision flowing through the boy’s eyes as the jagged breaths he took decreased more overtime.

“Well now what?” Bloom asked, shifting closer to the man once more. *please don’t.* Something was gonna happen, and with someone under the bed, not very ideal was it? Not long after, the boy felt sick to his stomach while kiss smacks and loveless exchanges filled up the entire room. The weight of the bed increasingly shifted, eventually sinking almost half of the mattress.

With nowhere else to go and nothing else to do, Will had to endure this mess of an event, in silence. This felt like a huge early April fool’s joke on the boy, it was incredibly unbelievable. All the shit the universe allowed to happen to him. Wishfully thinking this was of God’s “divine plan”, or rather, a divine comedy. A journey through hell.

Even after all the misery and suffering, there’s still a chance of salvation. But at this point, Will thought his life could only be defined by the latter definition of comedy. *Disgraceful, disillusioned, a huge joke, with a deliciously rotten side dish of tragedy.* After all, what is there else to hope for at this moment, as mattress springs cranked, low groans echoed the reverberated room, and soft thuds went in and out of one after the other ear. *I’m the great spectator of my own suffering. A fool.* Will sent the audio message to Agent Starling. *Ting!* The phone sounded out. The entire room finally silenced.

Chapter End Notes

bruh my updates are so inconsistent LMAO sorry ya'll.. and sorry for the cliffhanger hahaha (Also just imagine Hannibal’s bedroom to be a hybrid of his study room and his actual bedroom in the show LOL)

Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

My vision showed static images of fuzzy white clouds, my ears gradually rang till tinnitus was the only one whispering in my ear and suddenly, I couldn't feel.

"What was that?" The bed abruptly shifted, Alana's whispy voice echoed in the small room just in between short bouts of breaths shared between them.

Hannibal chastely kissed her. "I don't know, it must've been my phone." He laid down beside Bloom then lit up a cigarette, the suffocating smoke scent filling up every corner of the room. The weight of the bed shifted once more as Alana got up and picked up her stray clothes from the floor, leaving a wasted Hannibal on the bed.

Not long after, the latter got up and placed on a night robe before leading Alana, ashes falling down and under the bed as he carelessly stubbed the cigarette out on the ashtray settled on the bedside table. Will pinched the tip of his nose, hoping to not accidentally breathe in the stray cigarette ashes migrating under the bed. Now Will wondered, how the fuck did his phone not be heard? Did it really sound out? Did it but it was just not loud enough to be heard? Or did Hannibal hear it but choose not to notice in hopes of saving face? Either way, the only agenda for the boy right now was to get out. The race started the moment the lights turned off and the bedroom door shut. In swift fashion, he crawled out from under the bed and brought out his phone flashlight once more to find any other window or crawl space he could escape out of.

Unsurprisingly, the only accessible windows that were visible from his peripheral were the ones outside the bedroom and the balcony, but of course those were completely out of the question at this point. It would be too risky. He continued to desperately search every side, wall, and corner of the room just to almost find nothing. One last look from the one and only curtain in the room, stationed at almost a completely hidden crevice behind the bed frame and lo and behold, a small crawl space window and a fire escape ladder attached to it, almost too conveniently. Despite the growing skepticism in Will, he had no more time left to lose as the sound of footsteps increased towards the closed room. After a blundered attempt of opening it from his sweaty palms, the window finally opened and out he went.

"Don't hide Will, I know you're in there." Will shut the window as quietly as he could and climbed down the metal staircase as fast and quietly as he could. Though the loud clanging of metal begged otherwise, it was not about saving face anymore. It's about survival. *Shit shit shit shit.* The boy repeated like a mantra as he jogged down the steep steps without any care to be less discreet.

Will finally jumped down the final steps in brief victory before running away as fast as he could. The sun was setting and less and less people were being seen roaming around the streets; well not that Will was out and about the whole day but everyone looked like they were either rushing home, running for shade, or both. Before he even knew it, the low rumble

of thunder rumbled and rain droplets started dropping down his hair, to his eyes faster than he could anticipate it.

What a fucking mess. He thought, running to the nearest shade he could find in his peripheral vision, which was a gazebo in the middle of the fucking walkway. He'd be caught dead if Hannibal actually had the effort to even follow him through the horrid weather. *Think, think, think* . Will paced around in the shade of the gazebo. Other options he thought of were either running to the coffee shop with the risk of it being closed, or resorting to Bev. But the only problem was that he didn't know where she lived anymore and the signal in that area was pretty shit.

Thunder lit up the skies in intervals as rain piled up on the ground, eventually creating a mini flood puddle. So on impulse, Will sprinted to the coffee shop which was probably a 10 minute walk away from the dorm house and a 5 minute travel time by running, if one is completely familiar with the directions. Thankfully, he wasn't completely unfamiliar with the vicinity and figured out his way, with a little confusion and panic as a predicament. Will ran and splashed through the torrent rain for almost 10 minutes, drowning in his own breath and with only his unfortunate jacket as the only way to cover himself up.

Then alas, the familiar light to the coffee shop finally appeared in sight, but with more people than usual flooding the place, trying to take shade. Will hastily pulled open the foggy glass door and pushed through the growing crowd, not caring for the mess he was making from being drenched. A sour look was mutually manifested by the strangers around him, who eventually moved away, alienating the boy. Will found this nothing more than a blessing. He continued to look around for Matthew and his luck was running out. A number of baristas swiftly worked around the counter, greeting and serving customers, but none of them had the strangely charming smile he was looking for. After a while of wandering around with sides of severe coughs and sneezes, he gave in and decided to just get himself a hot drink. The crowd around him continued to part like the Red Sea as he walked towards the counter to get a coffee.

Finally being next up in line, he saw a fairly attractive barista who was not much shorter than him. She sported a mid-length ashy blonde hair, tucked in a clean bun as she greeted the customer before him with a welcoming but firm grace. Will can't help but stare at the lady and feel a sort of uncanny feeling growing in him, she looked familiar.

"Hi, welcome, what can I get for ya'?" She greeted, with an acquainted fanged smile and a tinge of an exotic accent. A wave of deja vu hit Will's head, causing a discreet jerk and a confused stare to scan the lady up and down.

"Large black coffee." Will only sighed, shaking his head and taking out his wallet and tossing the exact amount it cost before the latter could reply back. The barista squinted back at him with familiarity, causing an anxious look from the boy.

"What?" Will hissed out.

"Hey, you're Will Graham aren't you?" The lady smiled and pointed, while the latter rolled his eyes at the hostile niceties and looked back at her annoyingly. Shivers and cold sweats ran

up and down his body as the time passed and this kind of recognized interaction left a distasteful feeling over him.

“Yeah, why? I- look ma’am I’m drenched in rain, people are staring at me and it is pretty damn cold in this coffee shop so can i just get my drink and leave, please? I don’t wanna cause any more of a scene here.” He bluntly replied back, with a forced respectful tone.

“Yeah yeah sure no problem, it’s coming right up.” She handed over the order to another barista working by the bar. “Sorry, my brother talks about you quite a lot so it’s kinda hard to get your name out.” Will took one last confused glance at her as he took the handed receipt and walked away to the side. He continued to stare at the lady with bewilderment, unknowingly wanting to ask her name for some apparent reason but just not gathering enough courage to do so. Will’s coughs and sneezes increasingly intensified as he stood by, eventually coming to a point where he felt like he was burning up. He felt like he was gonna faint right at that moment.

“Large black coffee for Will Graham?” The barista called out, causing heads to turn at the boy. Will ignored the surprised and alienating looks as he walked tiredly to the counter. It was almost too painfully obvious that something with him was not right. Some strangers showed a look of sympathy, wanting to help the boy while others only offered a twitchy eye and a brief, uncomforting look of judgment before going back to their empty conversations.

“Mister are you alright?” She asked with genuine concern as the boy finally reached the counter. Will weakly shrugged his shoulders. “Is there a clinic round’ here or somethin’?” He glanced up at the lady, who intensely sighed worriedly. She looked around at the waiting customers and crouched lower to Will’s eye level, now laying his head down his palms on the countertop.

“Look mister, there’s only a hospital nearby and it’s quite a long walk. I’m hoping you know where it is.”

“No.”

“I can take you there.”

Will eyed her up and down in growing annoyance. “You should get back to work, just give me the directions and I'll be fine.” He took his coffee from his hands and impatiently waited for an answer. She took off her apron and handed it over to one of the stand-by baristas by her side.

“No, I can't let you go like this.” The lady placed the back of her palm to his forehead, making Will jerk his head away weakly. “You’re burning up.” Despite the weird looks given by the customers and the other workers, she proceeded to give instructions to one of the other busy waitresses before heading out the workstation and hurriedly walking Will out of the cramped coffee shop.

“L-Lady, I told you I’ll be fine by myself. You- You could’ve just given me the directions.” Will coughed intensely in between his words. The latter looked back with disbelief. “Really now?” She opened an umbrella and walked to the side alleyway of the coffee shop. They

stopped at a black Bentley car, and even with the sickness overcoming all Will's senses, he stopped and gawked at the car before being forcefully pushed into the car as the rain intensified. She proceeded to slam the door shut before getting into the driver's seat.

"Jesus mister, I get it you're sick but you should really stay more alert. I was getting drenched out there." The car started up with a smooth growl as all of the lights to its interior lit up. Will stalled and looked around the expensive car with amazement. For a quick second, the latter adjusted the rear view mirror before aggressively dragging the gear stick down to drive and pushing down on the accelerator without any warning. Will quickly pushed the seatbelt on and clutched the grab handle like his life depended on it as the car sped up instantly at almost 90 mph. *This woman is a menace. I'm gonna fucking die.* He breathed in and out jaggedly as coughs got trapped in his throat.

"Hold on Mister Graham." She warned as she skillfully shifted gears and handled the steering wheel.

"No shit, lady." He closed his eyes and leaned on the window, trying to keep down the bile rising through his throat. A soft chuckle was placed out in response. Will jolted forward in inertia as the car abruptly stopped in front of the hospital emergency room. The boy hastily unbuckled his seatbelt and stepped out of the car, cold air stinging his warm face then proceeded to get pulled inside by the blonde latter carelessly, almost getting hit by the automatic sliding doors shutting on him.

"Stay put Graham." The girl authoritatively walked over to the lobby counter, not bothering to look back at the frail Will, who was now sitting on the cold metal waiting room benches, eventually sliding to a sleeping position.

Will woke up to the beeping sound of a heart monitor and the airy releases of his breath through a silicone nebulizer, wrapped around his head. The heart monitor's beeping sound further intensified as he looked around in a panic state and slowly regained his consciousness.

"Oh no you aren't" A hand quickly reached out to Will, weakly trying to remove the IV line embedded in his hand.

"G-Get off.." He mumbled in a frail state, head wobbling, curls flying astray in all and no direction at the same time. Will looked up at the same strange coffee shop lady he met just earlier and scoffed.

"Oh.. It's you again. Great," Will laid down again on the bed, facing the other side this time. She looked back at the half-sedated Will with a slighty offended tone, not expecting the snarky reaction.

"What are you impl- fuck never mind. Hey Graham=, are you listening to me?" No response. She put out a disingenuous laugh. Nevertheless, this didn't stop her from getting up and setting a couple of orange pill bottles and a glass of water on the bed stand on Will's side. The lady pointed at the pills authoritatively and sat back down on the squeaky leather hospital chair settled in Will's peripheral. The boy glanced back at her with a quick side eye look, causing a pained reaction from him.

“Fuck my head hurts, I cant even look properly.” Will pressed his palms to his eyes and laid back down on the bed.

“Don’t tell me I didn’t warn you to take those pills. You really are difficult, aren’t you?”

“Look, lady.” He turned his head slowly in the girl’s direction. “I don’t know whoever told you about who you think I am. But I’m a stranger to you. You’re a stranger to me. So what makes you care so damn much for you to stay here? Damn I don’t even know your name.” The lady slowly sat back and crossed her legs sharply.

“Is there anything wrong about it?”

“No. It’s just, why are you going through the burden of taking care of a sick rando, instead of going back to your job? I mean if you just left me to rot under the rain I would be fine with it. But why did you bother?”

“Dude. You were quite obviously burning up in *my* coffee shop and scaring customers away.” *Ah, figured.* “And right now, you’re above normal temp and if something bad happens to you because I didn’t do anything, I don’t think I can swallow the guilt of allowing someone to rot with the thought that I could’ve at least tried to help.” She looked down and mumbled “Not again at least.”

Not again at least?

“Wait wait- not again at least?” Will painfully sat up before getting interrupted by a cell phone violently ringing the room.

“Shit- sorry hold your thought.” The blonde haired woman walked out the room, finally leaving Will on his own. Will glanced to his side and found an open wallet, lying on the bed side table. Assuming it was the barista’s he looked at the driver’s license innocently but did not expect his heart rate to drop the next moment.

Lecter, Mischa

Will scrambled to get the wallet exactly back at its original positions as the door squeaked open. Everything’s starting to make sense. From the hair, eyes, facial structure down to the accent and the basic mannerisms. She’s a Lecter.

“There must be other Lecters in this goddamn place not whatsoever related to that piece of rot right? Right?!” Will combed his hair back and double checked the wallet again before placing it back.

Graham looked back at the wallet one last time and froze at the sight of the wallet still being open. But the girl was much faster than he was before anything could be done

“Sorry, stupid brother’s been bugging me all day. Fucking dick.” She shut her phone and carelessly threw it on the table. Will gazed at the phone with wide eyes and a shaky breath, as if he was trying his best to not be seen.

“Hello?” The latter waved her hand in front of Will, who was now staring back and forth between her and the exit. “Something wrong? Want me to call the doctor or-“

“Do not call the doctor.” Will jumped instantly, confusion overriding the latter.

“Oookay? You may want to drink these pills cause-“ The girl stopped mid-sentence, seeing Will aggressively jolt once more after being offered the medicine bottles.

“Alright.” Mischa slammed the pills on the bedside table. “What’s up with you? Why are you so nervous all of a sudden?”

“I’m- I’m probably just sick. Like you said- what does it matter to you anyway?” Will tutted at the latter, with detailed annoyance. Mischa’s eyes sharpened predatorily as she took notice of her open wallet which was situated on the bedside table and straight back to Will - the boy’s palms gripped the creased sheets tighter in a fight or flight response. Without any thought, Will spurted out a hesitant grunt - as if one was trying to piece the right words to say. The girl noticed this and walked towards Will in a calm, but edged manner.

Mischa bent down to meet Will at eye level. “I’m gonna assume you know who I am now.” She said in a monotonous fashion— eyes empty, lips pursed, but without any emotion painted on. Numbness is what it felt like, especially to Will. He looked straight down his hands and up towards the wall in front of him. But never turning to look at Mischa.

“And I’m gonna assume that *that*- “ Will eyed the phone. “-was Hannibal.” He finally turned to look at her, eyes Mischa bowed her head down and scoffed before pacing around the room.

“If I said it was?”

“Then I’ll sprint as far as I can out of here.”

“And if I said it wasn’t?”

“Then you’re a liar.”

“But either way you’re still gonna hate me right?” Will paused and sighed.

“Right.” Mischa nodded, arms crossed.

“Well it depends, man.” Will rebutted. She stared back with discontent mixed with a lingering effect of indifference which unsettled the latter even more.

“I don’t give a shit if I'm gonna be honest with you.”

“Fuck, why do you Lecters have to be so difficult all the time goddamn. Catch me a fuckin’ break.” Will mumbled under his breath, causing a scoff from the girl.

“Don’t you ever stoop me to my brother’s level. We’re not the same.” Will looked her up and down with grained surprise. His posture deflated at this, defenses almost too along with it.

“Uh huh. Fine. But if it’d be alright with you, I’d rather just get out of here and take care of myself. We could all forget that we ever met, alright?”

“Fine by me.” Mischa instantly replied as she sat back down on the armchair adjacent, crossing her legs. “But, where would you go, hm? Back to my brother’s? I’ve heard all about you Will, and I know you wouldn’t like that either.”

“Is that a threat?” Will laughed.

“It’s a warning. Not against you, but to help you.” The latter didn’t reply. Will only removed his glasses and pinched the pressure point in between his eyebrows as he sighed.

“Fine. What do you propose then?”

“Stay with me. For a while.”

“No way.”

“Because?”

“Are you serious right now? Mischa, as much as your intention seems for good and all, don’t expect my trust to be in your possession right now because my distrust in you is almost as large as my distrust in your brother. Also considering that you both are related. So that’s absolutely not for me.”

“Alright, fair enough. But where do you propose to stay?” Will thrashed around the bed in panic looking for his phone before getting it tossed to him by Mischa, accidentally hitting him in the chest a little bit too hard.

“Jesus- Ow- Maybe just handing it would be better next time. Just a thought.” The boy glared back at the latter before returning his gaze back to his phone.

1 New Message: Clarice Starling

Hi Will. It’s Agent Starling. Advanced apologies for the sudden visit.. I’ll be there in 30 minutes.

Sent 20 minutes ago.

Chapter End Notes

bro just dipped for 4 months (I think) and resurrected once more with a slightly long chapter this time. LMAO. Anyways merry christmas/happy holidays yall.

Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will looked around in panic as Mischa walked out of the room, answering a call once more. He looked at his wrist, not noticing his watch gone, before glancing at the digital clock situated at the middle of the room– just right at the middle of a crucifix and the television screen. *10:30* – it blinked. Not long after scanning the room for his clothes, Will found it laying on a wooden chair just right at the corner of the room then forcefully taking off the IV line impaled in his skin.

Mischa barged in the room, face painted with obvious panic as well. “Will. Bad news. He knows.” Will’s jerked up front as his eyes shot open.

“What?”

“Hannibal knows you’re here.” Mischa clarified, now looking back and forth between the door and the latter, as if she anticipated something.

“You told him I was here?!” The boy proceeded to rip the tie of the hospital gown before moving towards his clothes. Will did not care about changing in front of the latter for the lack of time and the increasing pressure of having to be the target of two conflicting people at the same uneventful time.

“Of course not! He just- knew! And he’s coming Will so, shit- you have to go. I just have to get some paperwork done. Give me 10 minutes and meet me at the back entrance. I’ll get you out of here, I just gotta go get some things settled.” Mischa ran out of the room, panicked, before running as fast as possible just in time for Will to finish getting dressed. Not long after, Will jogged desperately out of the room, hair half wet from the rain and sweat, and body still sore and heating up from the fever. The passing nurses gave him a worried look before going back to whatever they were doing. He then looked down the corridor and saw, lo and behold Agent Starling at the receptionist’s desk, only a person ahead of Mischa at the line.

“Holy shit.” Will turned around and walked as fast as he could, trying to take cover behind the passing nurses and doctors before stealing and wearing a stray white coat settled on a bench. As Will reached the end of the corridor, he bumped head first to a more obviously bigger man and began to apologize profusely before looking up.

“Fuck.” The toppling figure of Hannibal greeted the sickly latter with a small grin before pulling him aside and into a janitor’s closet.

“What the hell?! Let me go fucking bastard!” Hannibal tightly covered Will’s mouth with his hand.

“Calm down Will. I need you to seriously cooperate with me right now because an agent from the FBI is in the building right now, for you, and I need you safe.” Will stopped his resistance and widened his eyes in the dark, cramped room. Hannibal’s grip was still on his mouth so this prompted him to lick it as words would quite obviously be mundane at the current situation.

“You don’t give a shit about my safety.” Will scoffed. “Whatever you have going on with the FBI is on you, not me.” He desperately tried to save face. “So don’t bring me into *your* shit and definitely do not expect me to be on my knees for you. But if you have to shoot me in the head Lecter, please do. I’m genuinely begging. I’d rather die than see your stupid fucking face ever again so help me god, let me go.” Hannibal’s gaze pierced through the darkness.

“Is that how much you hate me?” Hannibal’s cold tone cracked, exposing a tinge of desperation. Will looked away and coughed profusely, almost collapsing before the latter anchored his body with strong arms.

“L-Let me go.” The taller man placed the back of his hand on Will’s forehead, causing the boy to jerk back and put out guttural coughs once more. Hannibal removed the white coat and jacket off Will and felt at his neck. Will’s skin sprouted goosebumps at this gesture.

“You’re sick."

“No shit.”

“I’m taking you home.”

“W-We’re” A sneeze interrupted. “We’re in the goddamn hospital. W-Why not just leave me here.” Before Will could refuse, he felt himself getting dragged outside, Hannibal’s iron grip holding his waist.

“That agent is gonna find you-.” *He doesn’t know.* Will thought before a familiar voice interrupted.

Will looked up and saw Matthew, standing across them, in gray scrubs under a white coat. The boy’s posture perked up at the sight of the lanky man, which Hannibal caught up on, making him tighten his grip around Will’s waist in response.

“Matthew-” Will called out in a relieved tone. Matthew only looked at the boy up and down with a closed smile one uses as they greet a stranger.

“I see you both have met.” Hannibal bluntly responded, causing a laugh from Matthew.

“Loosen up Lecter. I don’t really know him. Just acquaintances, that’s all.” *I don’t really know him..* The boy weakly smiled as Matthew patted Hannibal’s shoulder.

“Well, I better be going. I still have some rounds to catch up on.” Matthew smiled back at Hannibal, not once a look towards Will before walking away.

“Disappointed, aren’t you, Will?” Hannibal proceeded to walk, hand leaving Will’s waist to migrate to his left hand. Will looked back to see Matthew’s silhouette getting smaller and

smaller— as if trying to silently fall out for him in desperate hopes he would be in his arms instead. “Let’s go.” The bigger man interrupted, as a different kind of sharp pain lingered on Will’s chest– internally this time. Before the boy knew, he was already sitting in Hannibal’s car, his seatbelt getting put on by the man. Night breeze blew through Will’s wet curls as the car windows were all down– the air conditioner turned off. The burning memory of Matthew treating him as if he were a stranger made him even more sick than he already was.

As the car slowly passed by the streetlights, Will saw the bloodied silhouette of Nicholas Boyle standing under the flickering lights, causing him to instantly jerk and look away in motion sickness and unwarranted guilt. Hannibal noticed this and looked at the boy— his eyes twitching as it squinted shut. The car came to a sudden halt which woke Will up. From the wave of nausea mixed with the indecisiveness to vomit or not whenever he moved just an inch of his body, he immediately knew he was too frail to even remove the seat belt from his body, let alone walk out of the car himself.

“Will.” Hannibal shook the boy’s shoulders— Will only looked at him with groggy, half shut eyes before trying to get the seatbelt off himself once more and ultimately failing at it. Hannibal’s sharp eyes softened as they slowly fluttered shut. His left hand pressed the belt button down before transferring to the back of Will’s limp head, while his right went under the boy’s shins in order to carry him bridal style out of the car. Will felt all of this happening, and, obviously, he wanted to object, but his body was almost completely shutting down on him and the littlest strenuous move would break him.

This place felt different. It wasn’t the usual dorm house with jagged breaths and whispers of frantic maids and stern butlers greeting them while they waited in Hannibal’s presence. The place didn’t even feel or look like it resided in the campus.

Hannibal struggled to get the door open, dropping his keys on the patio floor. “Will, I’m gonna have to ask you to get on your feet for a moment.”

No response. Will’s hand went limp along with his head— only a sudden twitch as a response. Hannibal sighed at this and managed to unlock the door after snatching the jangling keys off the floor along with Will still in his arms. Automatic pin lights lit up the hallways and the crisp scent of expensive air freshener hit Will’s unconscious senses.

“Sit up.” Hannibal commanded the boy, in a softer tone this time. Will’s posture melted like gelatin in a hot stove without the older man’s assistance— his body heated up each moment that passed, to which Hannibal instantly realized. Will’s curls bobbed back and forth as a towel rubbed forcefully through his head, drying the droplets left of his once damp hair.

“St-Stop ih-“ Will breathlessly said as he squinted his eyes weakly— Hannibal ignored this. After about a minute of drying Will’s hair, the elder proceeded to unbutton his blouse to which Will forcefully stopped with what little of strength he had left in him. To the boy’s surprise, the latter did not insist and instead tossed a robe and set a pair of silk pajamas beside him.

“I’ll knock again in a minute. If you’re not dressed I’ll do it myself.” The door slammed shut, making Will look up and profusely blink in sudden confusion. *Hannibal accepting boundaries.. Huh..* Thankfully, with what little of strength he had left, he was able to change

into what seemed like Hannibal's pajamas in time before the older man knocked again. Will looked to the body mirror to his side and found himself looking like a child in his father's clothes again from how oversized the sleeves and pants were.

The door clicked open and there Hannibal stood, holding a tray with a jug of water, a glass and a cold towel set on top of a first aid kit. Hannibal paused for a moment, mouth slightly ajar from the sight of the boy in his clothes— an embarrassed side eye as a response from Will before he tucked himself into the sheets. Hannibal looked over and handed a glass of cold water and a couple of pills to the latter— but of course Will didn't instantly accept this. He looked at the pills unsurely.

"I'm not trying to poison you, Will. You just have to take these." In an annoyed fashion, Hannibal tossed the case beside Will, who was already lying down the king sized bed.

"If- If I was just gonna be a-a liability to you. You c-could've just left me in that goddamn hospital to rot. Besides, I know y-you'd love to see me gone anyways." Hearing this pained Hannibal more than it should've. Will was rude, and he hated rude people to the point of wanting them dead. But the thought of Will gone out of his life was enough to feel a tiny prick of pain in the corners of his eyes.

"I don't think one can find anything wrong with wanting to take care of a friend."

"You don't care about me.. And we certainly are not friends." Will instantly responded, back facing Hannibal. "We're light years away from friends." Hannibal paused, and let out a silent breath before getting the cold towel by his side. The boy felt the side of the bed sink which panicked him as he found Hannibal trying to place him flat on his back.

"At least let me place this on you if you don't want to take the pills." Hannibal rubbed the cold towel on the boy's face gently but firmly, with one hand holding Will's shoulders down. Will showed clear resistance from the way his face scrunched and his eyes tightly closed— he didn't want to see Hannibal, more so in this kind of situation, or rather position. The older man noticed a blush creeping on the younger's pale face each time the skin of his fingers made contact with the latter's own.

As time passed, Will loosened up, eventually falling asleep to the repetitive motion of the soft towel rubbing across his skin. His long eyelashes peeked through his relaxed eyelids as his rose lips did an involuntary twitch every once in a while. Hannibal took in every single detail of Will's porcelain face, not realizing he had paused and sat staring at the boy for almost 10 minutes. He felt his pointer finger shake, wanting to touch Will's face and lips with his hands, without the soft barriers of the towel in his way. The growing urge for his lips to join the boy's own was strong enough to make his stomach drop from the painful yet euphoric feeling for a new kind of beauty. What is it like? A familiar kind? Or a new kind of love, even? Hannibal caught himself off guard at the hidden beauty that radiated from the younger boy which brought a new sensation, or feeling within him. Finally, snapping out of his longing gaze, he aggressively snatched the towel from his side and walked away, shutting the lights off before exiting. Hannibal's back slammed to the corridor wall as he intensely beat his chest — desperately trying to shake off the feeling that was rocking his, what he once thought, unbreakable soul.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the short cliffhanger last chapter so here's another to suffice. (Also hurrah! our favorite cannibal is falling in LOVE. After.. 15 chapters.. LMFAO. Told ya'll this was a slow burn)

Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will opens his eyes to Matthew sitting right beside him, adjusting the IV line that is connected to him. The taller man smiles and gives out the same familiar chuckle that always appears whenever Will is around— to which Will smiles back involuntarily before getting interrupted as Bev barges in the cramped hospital room with worn out flowers and a coffee with some of the spilled liquid painting the white paper lining of the cup.

"Will! You're alright!" Bev shouts, breathless— to which Will laughs at, relieved.

"Yeah of course I am. You-You thought I was dead? You're being way too over dramatic for someone who just got rained on."

"What?" The girl furrows her eyebrows as she drops the bouquet on an empty table. Bev drags the metal hospital chair beside Will and sits on it, facing the boy.

"Will. Do you not remember anything?" Will blinked confusedly, looking away.

"What are you talking about?" He laughed— Bev sat back and wiped the corners of her lips unsurely. For a moment, Will thought he remembered everything. He shakes his head and looks at Matthew but as he turns, it is no longer Matthew standing beside him— instead, it's Hannibal. The beeping noise on the pulse oximeter attached to his left pointer finger and the heart rate machine increased rapidly at vastly different rates— eventually sounding like convoluted static noise.

Will felt like drowning— his ears rang, the room was closing in on him and above all, the man who wants him dead the most is right beside him, controlling his life line. The boy looked around the room and blinked profusely, wondering if it was all a dream. Then a small mirror stationed on the bedside table exposed his naked chest, with a large band aid stuck on his stomach— blood droplets staining the white gauze, causing him to jump back at the sight of himself.

The boy turned to look back at his friend, only to find Mischa sitting in her stead. "He knows." She says, emptily this time— sounding more like a threat than a warning. Then he turns to Hannibal, who looks back at him with a hollow glare. Behind him, stands Agent Starling, only glancing at the boy once. Her eyelids droop heavily as she slowly blinks. "I'm sorry." She meekly adjusts the lapel of her coat in false confidence before walking away unsurely, exposing the pale corpse of Nicholas Boyle, sitting beside Abigail Hobbs— as continuous blood flows from her neck downwards, on an empty metal bench in the corridor.

The heart rate monitor speeds up, as Will goes through an epileptic seizure— mouth foaming while the whites of his eyes roll his watercolor irises to the back of his head. Hannibal's warm hand brushes his wet curls away from his face before migrating to his forehead. Then, he turns away, looking back one last time at Will— glassy eyes highlighted from the glare of

the corridor lights before leaving his own shadow behind him which grows more and more— physically distorting to eventually growing antlers before the flickering fluorescent lights bursts a sudden ray of light and shuts off completely.

Sunlight peeked through the translucent silk curtains draped just right beside the king sized guest bed— in which Will wakes up to a suffocating fever dream. Damp sweat drenched Hannibal's silk pajamas and imprinted a faint silhouette of his body on the gray bed sheets. He jolts forward and finds himself in a different room— a room vastly different from his usual at the dorm house. This one had a rustic yet modern interior with a mix of blue and beige paint lining the walls and furniture while the usual felt like someone picked out a random room from the Victorian Era and transported it back to the 21st century. Will looked around in panic, only to find himself still too weak to even sit up without wanting to vomit every time he did. His body still burned up and his head throbbed with immense pain— veins beating intensely through his flesh.

"Sit up." Will jolted backwards from the sudden rumbling voice of Hannibal ringing through his ears. This caught the older man off guard as he jerked backwards too in surprise. Hannibal closed his eyes and took a deep breath before going back to Will, who was still in shock from the latter.

Will placed his palms on his eyes. " *Fuck me* ." The boy mumbled under his breath— Hannibal's Adam's apple involuntarily bobbing as he looked away, fringe strands accidentally drooping down to his eyes. The younger boy looked at the latter with a sharp glare and kicked him with forceful anger, pushing the older man off the bed and down to the carpeted floor. Hannibal threw a distasteful glare that quickly melted into a look of fascinated contempt at Will.

"Don't you ever sneak up on me like that aga-Agh! " Will dropped back down on the bed, hands now clawing his hair in pain. Hannibal's hand moved towards the boy before retracting back and getting a glass of water and pills from the side table then handing them to Will. The younger boy turned and rolled his eyes before taking them anyways without hesitation, downing the water in one go and laid down once more facing away from the latter.

"You have to eat."

"Not hungry." The sharp growl coming from Will's stomach begged to differ, leaving his ego and soul shattered along the way.

"Are you sure about that?" Hannibal smiled contently before uncovering the metal tray at the table across the bed, exposing the fresh scent of a full English breakfast. Will's head peeked through the comforters and looked back at the older man who was not trying to hide the smug grin off his face.

Eyes unsurely glancing away and back at the tray, Will said, "Cover it back up." He closed his eyes

"Why should I?" Hannibal rebutted.

"I already told you I'm not hungry."

“Well I think your stomach would like to beg to differ just by the way it sounded less than 10 seconds ago. So might I suggest that you eat as the pills you’ve just taken are quite strong antibiotics and may damage an empty stomach.” The man handed him a full plate and a glass of lemon water. Will’s jaw clenched and ached even just at the raw scent of a freshly cooked meal right in front of his face. Without any word, Hannibal unfolded a small bed table over his lap and placed the plate on it, without the addition of the drinks as it would spill all over the pressed sheets.

Will rubbed his face in defeat and began to dig in the plate decorated with a full English. He started off slowly with the sausages, warm juices flowing down his lips and not lacking any spice, seasoning or flavor— and before Will knew it, he was jumping to the grilled tomatoes, then the eggs then afterwards losing track of anything he consumed forwards as he inhaled half the plate in one go as if he has never eaten in his entire life. This was, hands down the best things he has eaten in the entire dreadful 17 years he has been alive.

Hannibal looked back at the younger boy with a newfound shock and amusement he has never had the experience of feeling towards anyone before. Without Will saying a word, he loved the meal Hannibal cooked with his own hands just for him— and this brought a genuinely warm feeling of joy and pure satisfaction over to the cold shell of the older man.

Hannibal brushed up his hair with one hand as he felt like his face was heating up along with the rest of his body. He poured himself a glass of water, and downed it in one go before fixing his maroon sweater and clearing the table up for Will. The boy looked up and down at the latter. “Are you sick too?” He genuinely questioned. Hannibal looked back at him, his usual stone cold smolder replaced by shyness.

“Pardon?” He stopped dead in his process.

Will did a circular motion with his pointer finger to his face, still chewing the remains of food in his mouth. “You’re.. red.” Hannibal looked over his shoulder and shrugged— quickly finding an excuse from the obvious blush creeping on his face.

“Yes, but I just get allergic reactions to- some scents. I have a very sensitive nose.” While he wasn’t lying about having a keen sense of smell— used in this context, it was a lie. He dismissed Will as he continued clearing the plates and utensils, the boy slowly chewing his food whilst scanning the man up and down— spoon still hanging at the front of his mouth.

The boy fidgeted on the sheets as he hesitated to speak up first about the whole fiasco in the less than a week they were living together, afraid of starting the storm after the calm. Hannibal turned around and immediately noticed the scrunched look in Will’s face, not hesitating to ask the boy.

“Is there something wrong with the food?” Will snapped out from his sour gaze and straight into Hannibal’s eyes, who looked back at him with a hinting genuinity of concern.

The latter furrowed his brows and shook his head. “No no no it’s not that. I mean the food’s great and all, but- but nothing about that.” Hannibal put out a small sigh. “It’s-“ Will’s mouth involuntarily shut, pursing as his jaw clenched— he gathered what was left of himself and took a deep breath through the short, shallow breaths he was taking. “It’s about yesterday.”

For the first time, pure fear emptied Will's stomach— someway somehow, something's gonna happen, and it wouldn't be good. The younger saw the look in his senior's face— his daggered eyes softening, but still hostile enough to make you look away, and his arched lips parting from expected realization. Will's vision tunneled as his short breaths turned rapid, almost to the beat of his heart.

"I see. About that-.." The boy couldn't contain himself any longer— he was having a panic attack.

"Hannibal, I heard all of your conversation with Doctor Bloom and- and I had absolutely no plan to eavesdrop willingly under your stupid bed. I-I-I was just trying to find something but ended up getting stuck in- in there and- and-.." Will was stuck in his words. Vague images of his dream started to flash through his head as the loss of oxygen in his system and the rising fever made Will go limp, collapsing on the pillows. Hannibal instantly walked towards Will and sat beside him on the bed, gently shaking him first trying to get his attention before migrating his hands to the boy's burning face. Will looked back at the older man with fearful eyes as his breaths sharpened.

"Will, you're having a panic attack. Repeat after me." Hannibal proceeded to look at the wall clock and back at Will, whose eyes began to roll back but still remained conscious. "It's seven thirty-seven am. In Baltimore, Maryland. My name is Will Graham." The younger boy's pupils settled back into place, but breaths still jagged as ever.

The boy nodded and slowly repeated after Hannibal. "It's-It's seven- seven thirty-seven am. In Baltimore, Maryland. My name- my name." Droplets of tears started to roll down his face, feeling more and more afraid of himself in each moment that passed. The older man sat in the little space beside Will with him sitting in a crossed legged-position by the headboard as he pulled Will into a secure embrace, supporting the younger boy's head with his hand. Will sank into his ample embrace and tightened his grip around Hannibal's waist, his head laying down on the latter's lap. Hannibal's arms loosened and jerked in surprise. For the first time in his life, he felt like a teenager in love— heart beats turning into pounds through his rib cages and out his flesh whilst the lingering feeling of a shared sadness waned the infatuation out. But was it really love?

"I forgive you." Hannibal whispered through the quiet little whimpers of Will.

For the first time in his life, he felt a genuine sadness that made his chest pain physically— someone found a way to make him hurt. Will Graham found a way to make Hannibal Lecter feel pain, and it was through his own suffering. It was beautiful— watching Will never let him go, as his tears dampened the man's pants, but he didn't mind at all.

Hannibal didn't waste a single moment and allowed Will to fall into him for the next few hours they were there, together. Eventually, the older man fell asleep next to his junior only realizing when afternoon sunlight shone on his eyes. He found Will lying snug on his lap, further making him lack the courage to move away from the latter but eventually overridden by the desire and need to follow a schedule.

As quietly as he could manage, he regretfully moved away from the boy as he supported his head with one hand before settling down to the pillow and tucking him in. Hannibal cupped

Will's forehead with his hand and noticed the significant drop in temperature, but still edged in the fever zone. For a moment, he went out with the tray to refill the jug of water, changed the glass, brought an ice pack, and even went out of his way to cut up an assortment of fresh fruits, covered in saran wrap.

The man, sat beside Will once more to place the wrapped ice pack on his head— Will looked like a cherub, his perfectly coiled hair falling over his face as it is contrasted by the soft pink blush gradients his pale porcelain skin while his doe eyes and cherry lips involuntarily twitches every once in a while in a state. Hannibal towered over Will's face, mindlessly worshiping the sleeping beauty. He looked to the side mirror and saw himself and Will in such a position, thinking to himself, reminiscing the painting of Achilles lamenting Patroclus. Will looked beautiful.

Hannibal placed a chaste kiss on Will's limp hand before hesitantly getting up. Will's phone buzzed and popped out a notification from Agent Starling— the man glanced back at Will before diverting his attention to the phone.

49 new messages: Clarice Starling

Will. It's agent starling.. Please text us back when you could.. Jack's been a ticking time bomb here at Quantico since yesterday. Be careful around Lecter, please..

Sent 2 hours ago.

Hannibal turned the phone off and looked back at the sleeping boy— who was slightly snoring. The older man paused as his softened gaze instantly reverted back into daggers— eyelids lowering to cover half off his hazel pupils, the look of infatuation quickly fading into something darker. He switched the phone into sleep mode before grabbing a safety pin from his desk to extract the phone's SIM card out then placed the slot back in. The man pocketed the phone and card as he walked out.

"Where is the boy, Agent Starling?!" Jack Crawford briskly walked the hallways of the FBI Headquarters, causing the other agents to turn, freeze, or fumble whatever they were doing from his voice rumbling every section and corner of the floor. Every agent in the vicinity felt the fear of God placed into them every time Jack walked passed or was in a 5 mile radius around them— well almost everyone except Agent Starling.

Clarice Starling caught up to his pace, looking at her phone each interval of a second before placing her full attention on Jack. "I-I don't know sir. The phone's tracker has been off the grid ever since this morning."

The head agent grunted, pushing the glass door in his office. "Well then find a way to get it back- and him!" His voice roared like a sergeant major in the military. Clarice sighed as she

entered, sitting back anxiously on the chair adjacent to Jack's desk.

"Yes the tech team's been working on it all morning sir. Fortunately, we already know where Graham is. He's been in that place ever since last night and last we've seen of him before the tracker closed off on us was still there." This caused Crawford's eyes to look away from the gruesome case files he was staring at. "What did you say?"

"We found him, but bad news sir. We think he's in Lecter's house, out of the campus grounds-.." The man slowly stood up and scoffed. "-and if this is actually true then we might have been compromised. Also considering we don't have a permit to investigate out of the university's bounds-.." Jack tossed the case files over to the side of his desk, some flying off as he sat down on his chair— hand clawing at his head.

"You knew he was out of the campus, *with* Lecter and not once did you tell me?" A much quieter tone rang around the room— this paralyzed Clarice. Crawford laughed, pinching his nose bridge in disbelief. He pointed at Agent Starling's phone. "I'm goddamn sure that Graham did not voluntarily ignore our messages to him, more so drop the tracker on us. He *needs* us." Jack emphasized. "There's only one possibility that may have happened to make us lose our track on the boy and that is if he left his phone unattended to his care, causing someone to find it, remove the tracker and keep it- and you know who it is Agent Starling?"

Clarice looked away, realizing. "Hannibal."

"I'm glad you pieced it all together now, Agent Starling." The head agent nodded and clapped sarcastically. "You had precisely half a day to figure out that Will Graham was out of our hands and not once in the dreaded hours we have waited for an update, did you or any of your junior agents do anything about it." Jack shook his head.

"I expected more from you Clarice." Clarice leaned forward and scoffed.

"Well, I'm sorry *sir* . It's not like I have my hands full of struggling trainees eyeballing the shrike and ripper cases as far as I'm concerned." Starling's southern drawl thickened through her voice as each word was put out— very audibly in fact as it echoed off the tempered glass walls of Crawford's office. Jack turned around with a tilted head and a pocketed hand in his trousers which was enough to back Clarice down.

Starling looked up to the ceiling and closed her eyes, biting the walls of her cheeks. Jack grabbed the case files "It's only a few years left until I retire and I expect you to be in my stead when I'm gone. But I would be reconsidering if you keep this kind of performance up." Agent Starling's eyes twitched as Jack threw the files in the steel cabinets as forcefully as possible, causing the metal to rattle against the tempered glass walls.

"Be ready to give me a Plan B by the end of the day and a case report by the end of a week." A reminder that it was a Friday. Jack left the room— leaving his number one agent alone, and distressed. After a few moments, she gathered and grabbed the remaining case files on Hannibal scattered around Jack's desk and eventually left.

Chapter End Notes

And he sacrifices.. THE PLANNNNNNN

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